



EYEWITNESS TRAVEL

TOP 10

MEXICO CITY



- 10 Must-see museums & galleries
- 10 Spectacular Aztec ruins
- 10 Beautiful parks & gardens
- 10 Best hotels for every budget
- 10 Liveliest music & dance venues
- 10 Top restaurants and local delicacies
- 10 Great excursions
- 10 Most beautiful murals
- 10 Colorful local markets
- 10 Insider tips for every visitor

YOUR GUIDE TO THE 10 BEST OF EVERYTHING

VISIT...

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM

TOP 10 MEXICO CITY



NANCY MIKULA



EYEWITNESS TRAVEL



Left **Voladores, Museo Nacional de Antropología** Right **Catedral Metropolitana**



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opinion, of roughly equal merit.



Contents

Mexico City's Top 10

Museo Nacional de Antropología	8
Catedral Metropolitana	12
Palacio Nacional	14
Templo Mayor	16
Palacio de Bellas Artes	20
Bosque de Chapultepec	22
Museo Nacional de Arte	26
Xochimilco Floating Gardens	28
Villa de Guadalupe	30
Teotihuacán	32
Moments in History	38
Historic Sites	40
Museums	42
Architectural Highlights	44
Parks, Gardens, and Courtyards	46

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Left **Cantina, Coyoacán** Right **Interior, Capilla del Cerrito, Villa de Guadalupe**

Churches	48
Murals	50
Markets	52
Cuisine	54
Entertainment and Performing Arts	56
Outdoor Activities and Sports	58
Festivals and Events	60
Excursions	62

Around Town

Centro Histórico	66
Paseo de la Reforma and Zona Rosa	74
Chapultepec and Polanco	82
Coyoacán and San Ángel	88
Greater Mexico City	94

Streetsmart

Planning Your Trip	102
Getting to Mexico City	103
Getting Around	104
Things to Avoid	105
Budget Tips	106
Etiquette	107
Security and Health	108
Banking and Communications	109
Shopping Tips	110
Eating and Accommodations Tips	111
Places to Stay	112
Index	118
Phrase Book	126
Street Index	128



Left **Gardens, Castillo de Chapultepec** Right **Museo Frida Kahlo**



Key to abbreviations

Adm admission charge payable





MEXICO CITY'S TOP 10

Mexico City's Highlights
6-7

Museo Nacional de
Antropología
8-11

Catedral Metropolitana
12-13

Palacio Nacional
14-15

Templo Mayor
16-17

Palacio de Bellas Artes
20-21

Bosque de Chapultepec
22-25

Museo Nacional de Arte
26-27

Xochimilco Floating
Gardens
28-29

Villa de Guadalupe
30-31

Teotihuacán
32-35

Top Ten of Everything
38-63

MEXICO CITY'S TOP 10

TOP 10 Mexico City's Highlights

Pulsating with life and culture, blessed with perpetually spring-like weather, and with a fascinating blend of history and modernity, Mexico City is endlessly surprising. With excellent museums, ornate churches, colonial palaces, and urban parks, the city attracts a large number of visitors.



2 Catedral Metropolitana

The largest and most important colonial cathedral in the Western Hemisphere, it took almost three centuries to build and majestically blends Baroque and Neo-Classical styles (see pp12–13).



3 Palacio Nacional

This massive executive palace and government office stands along the east side of the Zócalo and showcases Diego Rivera's famous mural, *Epic of the Mexican People* (see pp14–15).



4 Templo Mayor

An accidental discovery led to a massive archeological effort that uncovered the ruins of this Aztec temple. A museum was built to house the artifacts recovered (see pp16–17).

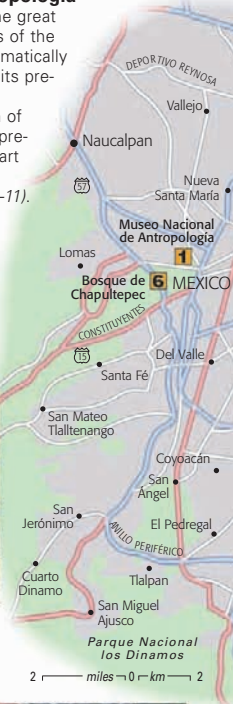
5 Palacio de Bellas Artes

The spectacular performing arts *palacio* is a city icon, combining an exquisite white marble exterior with an Art Deco interior having Mexican touches (see pp20–21).



1 Museo Nacional de Antropología

One of the great museums of the world dramatically presents its pre-eminent collection of Mexican pre-Hispanic art by region (see pp8–11).





Bosque de Chapultepec

6 Bosque de Chapultepec Mexico City's lovely urban park is one of the largest in the world and home to many of the city's top museums and family attractions (see pp22–5).



Museo Nacional de Arte

7 This exquisite *palacio* is home to the nation's extensive art collection, encompassing nearly five centuries of magnificent masterpieces by Mexico's finest artists, including Miguel Cabrera, José María Velasco, Diego Rivera, and many others (see pp26–7).



8 Xochimilco Floating Gardens

Colorfully decorated *trajineras* (flat barges), propelled by boatmen with long poles, carry merry-makers on floating-parties along the shady, tree-lined Aztec canals of Xochimilco, "the place where flowers grow" (see pp28-9).



 Villa de Guadalupe

One of the holiest Catholic shrines in the Western Hemisphere honors the Virgin de Guadalupe, Mexico's patron saint, who appeared in a vision to an indigenous Mexican peasant, Juan Diego in 1531 (*see pp30–31*).



 Teotihuacán

10 Teotihuacan The largest archeological site in Mesoamerica, and one of the most impressive in the world, this ancient city reached its zenith in AD 550 (*see pp.32–5*).



Top 10 Museo Nacional de Antropología

One of the most important of its kind in the world, this anthropological museum presents an outstanding collection of Mexican pre-Hispanic art in a stunning modern building. A dramatic central courtyard, highlighted by a spectacular fountain, is surrounded by a series of halls, each showcasing an ancient Mexican culture and society.



Cacaxtla fresco paintings

⌚ Arrive early in the morning to avoid the worst of the daily crowds. If you have limited time, visit the Mexica Hall first to see the fabulous Aztec collection.

☕ The café downstairs is excellent, offering a full lunch buffet as well as sandwiches, salads, and full meals.

- Map E3
- Avenida Paseo de la Reforma, and Calzada Gandhi, in Colonia Chapultepec
- 5553-6381
- Metro 7 Auditorio and Metro 1 Chapultepec, Turibus Centro stop #17
- 9am–7pm Tue–Sun
- 51 pesos. Children, students, teachers, seniors over 60 free with appropriate ID. Free Sun for Mexican citizens and residents
- Audioguides available
- www.mna.inah.gob.mx

Top 10 Features

- 1 Pre-Classic Central Mexico Hall
- 2 Teotihuacán Hall
- 3 Toltec Hall
- 4 Aztec or Mexica Hall
- 5 Oaxaca Hall
- 6 Gulf Coast Hall
- 7 Maya Hall
- 8 Western Cultures Hall
- 9 Northern Cultures Hall
- 10 Ethnography Halls

1 Pre-Classic Central Mexico Hall

The hall features artifacts that highlight the achievements in pottery and stone sculpture during the years 2300 BC to AD 100. The Acrobat from Tlatilco, a fine vase, is displayed here.



2 Teotihuacán Hall

The finely crafted artistic, religious, and architectural objects displayed in the hall (above) reflect the skills of the craftsmen, artisans, and builders of this first great Mexican city. The craftsmen depicted deities in stone carvings, finely painted murals, and on intricately decorated vessels. The huge monolith of the goddess Chalchiuhtlicue is one of the highlights of the hall.



Carved pillar and water fountain

Key

- First Floor
- Second Floor





3 Toltec Hall

This hall displays art objects from the great Toltec city-states that developed from 850–1250. The sculpture of a bearded warrior emerging from the mouth of a coyote (above) can be seen here.

5 Oaxaca Hall

This hall showcases artifacts from the two cultures that flourished in Oaxaca – Zapotec and Mixtec. There is a reconstruction of the Zapotec Tomb of Monte Albán and many elegant clay vessels with various figures on them. The Mixtec collection features silver and gold pieces, and carved jade and obsidian.



6 Gulf Coast Hall

The Olmecs are known for the colossal stone head sculptures of their leaders (above), two of which are in this hall. Also displayed are stone masks and sculptures.

8 Western Cultures Hall

This hall displays artifacts from western Mexico, including pottery figurines and vessels of unusual complexity and fine design. The hunchbacked figure of a god on a serpent is notable.

9 Northern Cultures Hall

The hall features artifacts from northern Mexico. Pottery, masks, and weapons form the largest portion of the collection. The highlight is the finely formed decorated pottery from Paquimé featuring red or black designs on cream-colored vessels.

10 Ethnography Halls

The second floor of the museum is filled with brilliantly colored textiles, costumes, and art of the indigenous people from all regions of Mexico. Cultures are organized by state and in relation to the anthropology halls downstairs.

Museum Guide

The entrance hall contains the gift shop, restrooms, temporary exhibit rooms, and ticket area. It opens into a huge courtyard whose roof is supported by a modern carved pillar and water fountain. The courtyard has doors that open into the museum halls. Each of the halls displays archeological objects from a different region or culture in Mexico and each has a door that leads into an exterior garden area where reconstructions and artifacts are on show. The entire upper floor showcases the ethnology collection.

4 Aztec or Mexica Hall

The museum's largest hall is filled with impressive monoliths and finely crafted objects representative of the immense diversity of Aztec culture. The centerpiece is the intricately carved Sun Stone, a circular disk representing the Mexica cosmos (see p10).

7 Maya Hall

Exquisite examples of highly decorated temple architecture and fine artistic creations of Mayan civilization fill the hall. There are also many stucco figures that illustrate the Mayan ideal of human beauty.



In the garden of the Maya Hall is a reconstruction of Palenque's Temple of Inscriptions



Left **Model of Tenochtitlán's Sacred Center** Right **Aztec stone head**



TOP 10 Aztec or Mexica Hall

1 Sun Stone

This magnificent monolith depicts the first four Aztec worlds, thought to represent locations where the Aztecs lived before relocating to Tenochtitlán in 1323. The central figure is either the sun god or the earth god, with a sacrificial knife for a tongue, and claws holding human hearts. The four squares surrounding the center depict the four previous worlds, represented by a jaguar, wind, fiery rain, and water. The next circle of twenty squares represents the Aztec month made up of 20 days. Other symbols depict the 18 months of a year and five sacrifice days, representing the 365 days of the Aztec year.



Sun Stone

conquest, based on written descriptions by Cortés and other Spaniards. Although Templo Mayor is shown larger than it was, the painting offers a stunning glimpse of the lost cities.

4 Obsidian Monkey Vessel

One of the museum's most valuable and most viewed objects, this charming vessel in the form of a monkey holding its tail in both hands is carved from a single piece of highly polished obsidian. The monkey, in Aztec mythology, is associated with the god of wind and black rain clouds.

5 Headdress of Quetzal Feathers

The headdress on display is a replica of the original which Moctezuma II presented to Cortés. A complete arc of elegant turquoise quetzal feathers are mounted on an exquisite headband decorated with red beads, turquoise, and gold.

2 Coatlicue

Several monumental sculptures of Coatlicue, the mother goddess, who gave birth to the sun, moon, and stars survive. One sculpture reveals her deadly side, with a head like a snake, a necklace of human hands and hearts, and a skirt of serpents.

3 Tenochtitlán and Tlatelolco

A beautiful painting by Luis Covarrubias (1919–87) presents an idealized view of the shimmering lake-cities of Tenochtitlán and Tlatelolco before the

6 Coyolxauhqui

The huge stone head of Coyolxauhqui, goddess of the moon, depicts her warrior goddess persona. Her cheeks are decorated with rattlesnakes. According to Aztec myth, she was beheaded by her brother, Huitzilopochtli – the sun god – for impeding his birth.



7 Cuauhxicalli of Moctezuma I

Moctezuma I, the fifth Aztec emperor, consolidated the empire. His military victories are displayed on this enormous, intricately carved wheel-shaped stone. Eleven historical conquest scenes are depicted, showing battles that occurred in different parts of Mexico.

8 Xochipilli

The god of music, song, flowers, and love, Xochipilli sits on his throne decorated with butterflies and flowers, the symbols of his realm.

9 Ocelotl-Cuauhxicalli

A *cuauhxicalli* is a type of altar stone and is used to conduct sacrifices to the gods. The eagle and jaguar are common animal motifs used. *Ocelotl* is the Aztec name for a jaguar.

10 Chapulín

This unusual, large, red-colored stone grasshopper, or *chapulín*, was found on Cerro del Chapulín, Grasshopper Hill, which is the hill in Bosque de Chapultepec (see pp22–3) that the Castillo stands on today. This place was sacred to the Aztecs and they built a temple here.

Top 10 Aztec Deities

- 1 Huitzilopochtli, supreme god of sun and war
- 2 Coyolxauhqui, goddess of the moon
- 3 Quetzalcoatl, god of wind and fertility
- 4 Tezcatlipoca, god of night, discord, and sorcerers
- 5 Xochipilli, god of love, beauty, dance, and flowers
- 6 Mixcoatl, god of hunting and the milky way
- 7 Omēteotl, lord of duality
- 8 Xiuhtecūtlī, god of fire and lord of turquoise
- 9 Tlaloc, god of rain and fertility
- 10 Coatlicue, goddess who birthed the sun god Huitzilopochtli, the moon, and stars



Aztec Relief Sculpture of the Birth of Quetzalcoatl

Mythology

The Aztecs believed that the world was created by the gods, and that their world was in the fifth and final iteration – the Sun Stone, the monolithic centerpiece of the Aztec Hall, is believed to depict the first four worlds. The heavens were comprised of vertical levels, with the supreme creators, the gods, reigning in the top level. Among the gods, one of the most important was Coatlicue, an Earth goddess who gave birth to the sun, moon, and stars.

Another creation myth describes the formation of the world by rival twins, Quetzalcoatl and Tezcatlipoca, representing good and evil. Aztec mythology held that the Universe is comprised of four parts, corresponding to the four cardinal directions with the convergence ruled from the center by Xiuhtecūtlī, god of fire and lord of turquoise. The reason that there are often multiple myths explaining single aspects of belief is that the Aztecs borrowed heavily from the Toltec, Teotihuacán, and other cultures. It is estimated that the Aztecs had a pantheon of over 1,500 deities when the Spanish, under the leadership of Cortés, arrived in 1519.



Coatlicue, the mother goddess

For 10 Catedral Metropolitana

With its richly ornate Spanish Baroque façade, Neo-Classical dome, and twin bell towers rising 220 ft (67 m), the cathedral is a majestic blend of architectural styles. Begun in 1525 it was designed and built in stages by many architects, artists, and sculptors. The cathedral was consecrated in 1667 and completed in 1813.



Altar of Forgiveness,
Catedral Metropolitana

The Altar of Forgiveness and several side chapels are always accessible, but the rest of the cathedral is restricted during mass.

The exterior of the cathedral is most beautiful in the early evening when the lights are on and it glows against the twilight sky.

Look through the glass panels under your feet in the courtyard to see the original courtyard and steps.

The rooftop restaurant of the Majestic Hotel offers views of the Catedral Metropolitana from across the Zócalo.

- Map Q2
- Zócalo
- 5521-7737
- Metro Zócalo
- 8am–8pm daily
- Free

Top 10 Features

- 1 Pendulum
- 2 Capilla de San José
- 3 Pipe Organs and Choir Loft
- 4 Capilla de San Felipe de Jesús
- 5 Altar del Perdón
- 6 Altar de los Reyes
- 7 Pinnacle
- 8 Metropolitana Sacarium
- 9 Miguel Cabrera Masterpieces
- 10 Capilla de Nuestra Señora de los Dolores



1 Pendulum

For years the cathedral had been sinking into the soft soil of what was once a lake. Extensive underground engineering efforts have largely stabilized the building. The pendulum (above) suspended from the ceiling tracks the tilt, marking a record on the floor.

2 Capilla de San José

This side chapel along the west wall of the cathedral can be easily recognized by the colorful ribbons placed in front of the statue of Saint Ramon. The devout believe that a woman can leave a personal message and a lock to put a stop to gossip doing the rounds in the village.



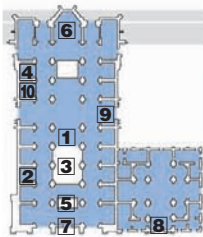
Choir, Catedral Metropolitana



3 Pipe Organs and Choir Loft

Two magnificent pipe organs (below) flank a huge two-level choir loft which has intricately worked stalls. Carved figures of bishops and saints decorate the upper level; ivory figures adorn the center.





4 Capilla de San Felipe de Jesús

Dedicated in 1636, this chapel (*right*) honors San Felipe de Jesús, the first Mexican Saint. The 17th-century paintings illustrate scenes from his life. The urn on the right side of the chapel contains the remains of Don Agustín de Iturbide, the first Mexican ruler following independence from Spain.



9 Miguel Cabrera Masterpieces

Four spectacular masterpieces by Oaxaca painter Miguel Cabrera hang in the vestibules above the cathedral's side doors (*below*).



10 Capilla de Nuestra Señora de los Dolores

The oldest chapel in the cathedral, it was completed around 1600. The image of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores in the center of the main altar is by Clemente Terrazas.

Cathedral Guide

Enter from the courtyard on the north side of the Zócalo. In the front center, is the Altar del Perdón. Behind this altar are the choir loft and two pipe organs. Next is the main altar with the Altar de los Reyes at the rear of the cathedral. There are seven chapels along the left and right side of the cathedral and at its center, between the choir loft and the main altar, hangs the pendulum that measures the tilt of the building.

7 Pinnacle

Sculptures of the three virtues, Faith, Hope, and Charity, adorn the pinnacle of the clock tower designed by Spanish architect Manuel Tolsá and completed in 1813. Tolsá was the cathedral's final architect, and was responsible for adding many of the details that harmonized and unified the completed design.

8 Metropolitana Sacarium

The sculpted façade of this parish church, which is attached to the cathedral, is considered to be the foremost example of the Churrigueresque style in Mexico. Built by Spaniard Lorenzo Rodríguez from 1740–68, the interior is in the Moorish style.



5 Altar del Perdón

This splendid gold altar, created by Jerónimo de Balbás, stands behind the Doors of Forgiveness, the central entrance to the cathedral from the Zócalo. The doors are open only on special occasions.

6 Altar de los Reyes

This Baroque masterpiece (*right*) by sculptor Jerónimo de Balbás is dedicated to canonized Kings and Queens. The altar has the paintings *Adoration of the Kings* and *Assumption of the Virgin* both by Juan Rodríguez Juárez.



The cathedral was built on the site of an Aztec temple



TOP 10 Palacio Nacional

This enormous palace dominates the entire east side of the Zócalo. Aztec Emperor Moctezuma II's castle stood here before Cortés destroyed it and constructed his own. The building has been expanded several times, and today it is used by the Mexican Government. The impressive edifice is made of granite and tezontle, a red stone.



Staircase of the Empress, Palacio Nacional

Have your photo ID available when you enter the door; the guards are efficient and may look in large bags.

The rooftop restaurant of the Hotel Majestic (see p113) offers excellent views of the Zócalo and is the perfect place to eat breakfast and watch the flag hoisting ceremony.

- Map Q3
- Zócalo
- Metro Zócalo
- 8am–6pm daily
- Free
- Photo ID required for admittance

Top 10 Features

- 1 Façade
- 2 Epic of the Mexican People
- 3 Historical Murals by Diego Rivera
- 4 Independence Bell
- 5 Benito Juárez Museo
- 6 Garden Patio
- 7 Pegasus Fountain
- 8 Staircase of the Empress
- 9 Presidential Balcony
- 10 Flag Ceremony

1 Façade

Three doors provide access to the impressive interior of this executive palace. The door on the right is for diplomatic access only and is also the door used by the President of Mexico. The door to the left was formerly used by the Finance Department and was dreaded by all who had to enter to settle their taxes. The central door is the main entrance and leads into a grand central courtyard.

2 Epic of the Mexican People

Diego Rivera painted his exquisitely colorful and detailed masterpiece on the walls of the central staircase from 1925–35. It provides an incredibly rich and vibrant visual history of the Mexican people from pre-Hispanic times through the Mexican Revolution. Full of life and whimsy, the mural captures the very essence of the nation.



Pegasus Fountain, Palacio Nacional



3 Historical Murals by Diego Rivera

The second floor hallway has nine murals by Rivera painted from 1941–52. Eight portray idealized views of village life before Cortés came. The ninth shows a village after Cortés' arrival.



4 Independence Bell

Padre Miguel Hidalgo rang this bell (above) in 1810, when he called for Mexican Independence. The bell was moved here in 1896 by Porfirio Díaz.





5 Benito Juárez Museo

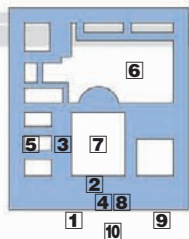
The President's office, bedroom, dining room, parlor, and other interesting memorabilia from his time in office are featured in this museum (*above*).

7 Pegasus Fountain

The beautiful main courtyard inside the palace features a lovely fountain with a statue of Pegasus, the Greek winged horse. Government functions are held here.

8 Staircase of the Empress

This simple but elegant staircase with its ornate brass railings has only two flights of stairs and no visible support.



10 Flag Ceremony

With impressive pomp and ceremony a large Mexican honor guard marches out of the Palacio Nacional each morning and crosses the street to the Zócalo where they raise an enormous Mexican flag (*below*). All the hustle and bustle in the plaza halts as the flag is raised in a formal drill. The ceremony is repeated every evening when the huge flag is lowered.



Site Guide

Enter through the central door and turn left. The staircase with the Diego Rivera murals is on your left. Walk up the stairs, the murals are on the walls above the landing. Continue up the stairs to the second floor and turn left to see the historical murals. Return to the first floor and turn left to visit the Staircase of the Empress, the Benito Juárez Museo, and the Garden Patio. Walk through the garden and re-enter the palace. Cross the main courtyard and come back out through the front door.



6 Garden Patio

A delightful botanical garden (*below*) lies secluded in the inner courtyard at the back of the palace just beyond the entrance to the Benito Juárez Museo. It is quiet, peaceful, and sheltered from traffic noise. Walk the geometrically placed, paved garden paths or sit on a shady bench and enjoy one of the city's prettiest gardens.



9 Presidential Balcony

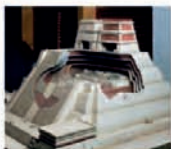
On Mexican Independence Day, September 15th, the president of Mexico stands on this balcony (*above*) just above the central door of the palace and repeats Padre Miguel Hidalgo's famous call for Independence (*see p38*). Thousands of spectators gather on the Zócalo to witness the event.





TOP 10 Templo Mayor

In Aztec times the Templo Mayor stood in a sacred walled compound in the center of Tenochtitlán (present day Mexico City) before Cortés destroyed it. In 1978 a massive round carved stone was uncovered accidentally near Zócalo that led to a major archeological project, uncovering the ruins of the magnificent double pyramid complex.



Model of the temple and its construction stages

1 Early morning (or a cloudy day) is the best time to visit the ruins, before the sun's glare makes it difficult to see the details of sculptures, murals, and construction.

2 Bypass the street food surrounding Templo Mayor and head to one of the hotels along the south side of Zócalo, or head farther south along Francisco I. Madero to #29 and stop in at Los Bisquets Obregón.

- Map Q2
- Seminario 8, on the east side of the Catedral Metropolitana
- 5542-0256
- Metro Zócalo
- 9am–5pm Tue–Sun
- 45 pesos, free Sun for Mexican citizens and residents
- Additional charges for video camera; audio guides available in Spanish and English
- www.templomayor.inah.gob.mx

Top 10 Features

- 1 Museo del Templo Mayor
- 2 Lacustrine Fountain
- 3 Monolith of Coyolxauhqui
- 4 Wall of Skulls
- 5 Chacmool Carving
- 6 Eagle Knights
- 7 Templo Mayor Construction Stages
- 8 Temple of Tláloc
- 9 Serpent Head Sculptures
- 10 Tenochtitlán Ceremonial Center

1 Museo del Templo Mayor

This museum designed by Mexican architect Pedro Ramírez Vázquez displays many of the artifacts discovered during the excavation of the temple ruins, including the original monolith of Coyolxauhqui.



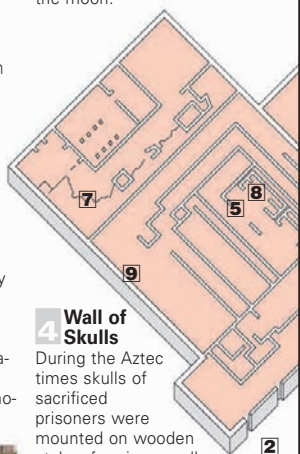
2 Lacustrine Fountain

An excellent fountain-cum-map (*above*) is located in the plaza. The base of the fountain forms a bas-relief map of ancient Tenochtitlán surrounded by the lake, canals, irrigation ditches, and small islands. This provides a contextual overview of the city that surrounded Templo Mayor before the Spanish conquest.



3 Monolith of Coyolxauhqui

This magnificent circular carved stone (*above*) depicts the dismembered Coyolxauhqui, goddess of the moon.



4 Wall of Skulls

During the Aztec times skulls of sacrificed prisoners were mounted on wooden stakes forming a wall of skulls (*below*), or a *Tzompantli*. The Wall of Skulls found in the museum is a replica of the original. In the ruins, there is also a wall of stucco-covered human skulls that forms a side wall of the Tzompantli Altar.





5 Chacmool Carving

This polychrome sculpted figure (*above*) in a reclining pose cradles a bowl on its belly which was used to hold peaceful offerings to Tláloc.

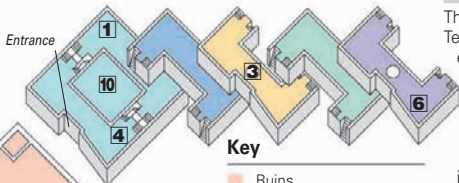
7 Templo Mayor Construction Stages

The Templo Mayor was enlarged seven times as the stature and prosperity of the Aztecs increased. These enlargements, referred to as construction stages, can be seen on a walk through the ruins (*right*).



10 Tenochtitlán Ceremonial Center

This large scale model of Templo Mayor surrounded by other buildings in the ceremonial center of Tenochtitlán creates a powerful visual contrast to the Spanish colonial buildings standing in the city center. The imposing architecture of the temple and the city of Tenochtitlán were so impressive that the early Spanish colonizers compared it to the great cities of Europe.



Key

	Ruins
	First Floor
	Second Floor
	Third Floor
	Fourth Floor
	Fifth Floor



6 Eagle Knights

Two of these remarkable life-size clay sculptures, each comprising five interlocking parts, were discovered in the House of the Eagles near the temple. One of them is on display in the museum (*above*). The Eagle Knights were elite Aztec warriors who dressed as birds of prey.

8 Temple of Tláloc

The Aztecs made peaceful offerings to the Chacmool sculpture in the Temple of Tláloc, god of rain, to ensure successful harvests, fertility, and abundance.



9 Serpent Head Sculptures

Intricately carved and brightly painted stone serpent heads (*above*) are seen to guard the base of the main staircase of this great Aztec temple.

Site Guide

Look at the fountain near the entrance which depicts the pre-Hispanic Aztec city of ancient Tenochtitlán. Turn left as you enter the gate and follow the one-way outdoor walkway through the ruins. At the far end of the ruins the path ends at the museum entrance. Look at the model of the Tenochtitlán Ceremonial Center as it would have once stood, and then visit the eight museum rooms in sequence. Turn right at the museum entrance, watch the video before proceeding up the stairs to room 1. Continue through rooms 2, 3, 4, and 5. Rooms 4 and 5 are interconnected. Finally take the stairs back down to rooms 6, 7, and 8.



Templo Mayor was a symbolic representation of an Aztec sacred mythical place, Coatepec or "the Hill of the Serpent"







TOP 10 Palacio de Bellas Artes

A true masterpiece of architectural design, the lovely Palacio de Bellas Artes is one of Mexico City's most beloved buildings and is home to an excellent performing arts center. It was designed by Italian architect Adamo Boari. Its broad plaza and formal flower gardens blend into the natural beauty of the adjacent Alameda Central.



Sculpture, central lunette, Palacio de Bellas Artes

Admission is free on Sundays; the theater is open to the public (1–1:30pm Mon–Fri and during events).

There is an extra charge to visit the Museo Nacional de Arquitectura, of most interest to serious architecture fans.

Dine surrounded by resplendent Art Deco at the Café del Palacio in the lobby.

- Map N2
- Eje Central Lázaro Cárdenas and Av Juárez
- 5512-2593
- 10am–6pm Tue–Sun
- 35 pesos, free Sun
- www.bellasartes.gob.mx

Top 10 Features

- 1 Statues of Pegasus
- 2 Façade Sculptures
- 3 Eagle
- 4 Lobby and Vestibule
- 5 Courtyard
- 6 Murals
- 7 Theater
- 8 Art Exhibitions
- 9 Museo Nacional de Arquitectura
- 10 Ballet Folklórico de Mexico

1 Statues of Pegasus

Four sculptures of the winged horse, Pegasus, in a variety of aspects, by Agustín Querol, stand in the esplanade in front of the entrance to the performing arts center (*below*).



2 Façade Sculptures

The exterior façade has intricate and ornate sculptures in the arch above the main doorway. In the center Leonardo Bistolfi's (1859–1933), *Birth of Venus*, represents harmony. The statues on either side, by Boni, symbolize love and hate.

4 Lobby and Vestibule

A classic Art Deco black marble stairway, leads into the vestibule. Across the black-and-white marble floor are the metallic theater doors (*below*).



3 Eagle

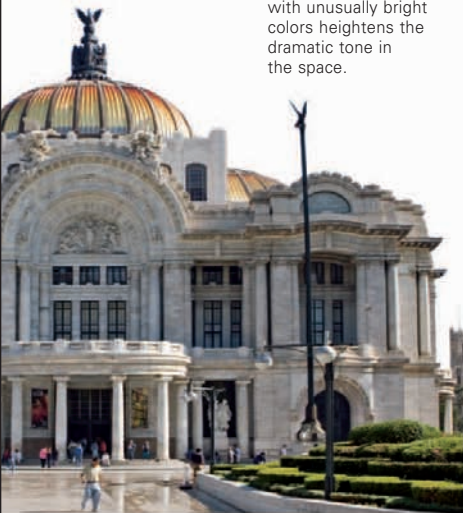
On the dome is Geza Marotti's sculpture of the Mexican national symbol, an eagle (*below*). It is perched on a cactus, eating a snake. Figures under the eagle represent comedy, tragedy, drama, and lyrical drama.





5 Courtyard

The four-story courtyard is light, airy, and dramatic with red marble columns and a high, four-domed ceiling (*above*).



9 Museo Nacional de Arquitectura

This museum occupies the fourth floor of the *palacio*. Changing exhibits feature various aspects of Mexico City, and occasionally, international architecture.

10 Ballet Folklórico de México

Folk dances from many regions of Mexico are presented on Wednesday and Sunday evenings by the excellent Ballet Folklórico. Colorful costumes, lively music, choreography, and stage sets offer fine entertainment.

6 Murals

Famous muralists Rufino Tamayo, Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and José Clemente Orozco painted their huge murals on the walls of the second and third floors of the building facing the courtyard. The contrast between the traditional Art Deco interior and the political murals painted with unusually bright colors heightens the dramatic tone in the space.

8 Art Exhibitions

The second and third floors have several rooms and galleries that host international travelling art exhibitions. An exceptional recent exhibition featured four centuries of European masterpieces in oil (*below*).



Key

- First Floor
- Second Floor
- Third Floor
- Fourth Floor

7 Theater

The theater has a magnificent stage curtain made by Tiffany & Co. of New York. The depiction of the Valley of Mexico on the curtain is formed with a million pieces of opalescent glass. The stunning crystal ceiling depicts Apollo and the nine muses on Mount Olympus.

Mural Controversy

Diego Rivera, an avowed communist, was commissioned to paint a mural for the Rockefeller Center, New York. Nelson Rockefeller, a staunch capitalist, approved Rivera's preliminary drawings but when Rivera later included a portrait of Lenin in the mural, Rockefeller insisted that Lenin be removed. Rivera refused, and the mural was destroyed. Rivera reproduced the mural on the third floor of the *palacio* with the title *Man, Controller of the Universe*.



Construction of the Palacio de Bellas Artes began in 1904, was interrupted by the Mexican Revolution, and completed in 1934

Top 10 Bosque de Chapultepec

Since the arrival of the Aztecs, Chapultepec has been a special place for residents. Today this 1,600-acre (648-hectare) green urban park includes woodlands, forest, lakes, gardens, and walking paths, and provides an abundance of activities for the entire family. Los Pinos, at the edge of the park, is the official residence of Mexico's President.



Paddle Boats, Lago de Chapultepec

Sunday is the busiest day in the park.

The Turibus route winds through the park with stops near the major attractions.

Dine with a view of the lake at Meridien on Lago Mayor (see p87), or enjoy the excellent café at the Museo Nacional de Antropología.

- Map D4
- Main entrance at the west end of Paseo de la Reforma
- Museo Tecnológico de la CFE: Map C5; Section 2, Bosque de Chapultepec; 5516-0965; 9am–5pm Daily; Free
- La Feria de Chapultepec: Map C5; Section 2, Bosque de Chapultepec; 5230-2121; Low Season 10am–6pm Tue–Sun; High Season 10am–8pm daily; Adm
- Museo de Historia Natural: Map B6; Section 2, Bosque de Chapultepec; 5515-2222; 10am–5pm Tue–Sun; Adm, free Tue

Top 10 Features

- 1 Museo Nacional de Antropología
- 2 Castillo de Chapultepec
- 3 Hot-Air Balloon Rides
- 4 Zoológico de Chapultepec
- 5 Monumento a Los Niños Héroes
- 6 Papalote Museo del Niño
- 7 Museo Tecnológico de la CFE
- 8 Lago de Chapultepec, Lago Mayor, and Lago Menor
- 9 La Feria de Chapultepec
- 10 Museo de Historia Natural



1 Museo Nacional de Antropología

Mexico's largest museum, this archeological treasure trove has 12 halls filled with brilliant artifacts that relate each significant chapter in Mexico's pre-Hispanic human history (see pp8–9).

2 Castillo de Chapultepec

The former residence of Mexican presidents, the stunning castle (see p24–5) with sweeping terraces and manicured gardens, now houses the Museo Nacional de Historia.

3 Hot-Air Balloon Rides

This tethered balloon rises 400 ft (123 m), offering awesome views of the park and Mexico City. On a clear day, it is the ideal place to take panoramic shots of the city.



4 Zoológico de Chapultepec

This excellent zoo houses more than 2,000 animals in natural habitats, and is renowned for its successful captive breeding of giant pandas. Broad shady paths, excellent viewing areas, and well planned rest stops and food courts make this a nice place to spend a few hours. Rare animals like Mexican naked dogs and native wolves can be seen here (see p84).





5 Monumento a Los Niños Héroes

On the eastern entrance to the park six pillars topped with black eagles commemorate the heroic deaths of six young cadets during the US invasion of Mexico (see p84).



6 Papalote Museo del Niño

One of the best children's museums, this colorful and engaging museum has over 250 interactive exhibits based on the themes of science, technology, and art. New attractions are added every year. There is also an IMAX Theater with ten shows daily (see p85).

7 Museo Tecnológico de la CFE

This museum highlights the developments in Mexican industry, science, and technology. A detailed scale model of an electricity generating plant, railway exhibits with train cars and engines, and oil drilling equipment are the major draws of the museum.

9 La Feria de Chapultepec

More than 50 thrilling games and rides including bumper cars, a haunted house, and a traditional roller coaster can be enjoyed at this amusement park.



10 Museo de Historia Natural

Several huge pastel colored domes (above) contain a wealth of exhibits covering the natural world from the creation of the universe to the evolution of life and the world around us.



8 Lago de Chapultepec, Lago Mayor, and Lago Menor

The lakes are one of the most popular features of the park, and on weekends they take on a festive air. Hundreds of couples and families walk the shady paths surrounding them or take to the water in colorful rental kayaks, rowboats, and paddleboats. The walkways are filled with vendors selling their wares.

Los Pinos

The official residence of the President of Mexico was moved from the Castillo de Chapultepec to Los Pinos in 1935 by President Lázaro Cárdenas, when he decided to turn the Castillo into a museum for the public. The museum has two sections – the Alcázar and the Castillo. President Cárdenas selected an existing estate within Bosque de Chapultepec, La Horniga, as the official presidential residence. He planted numerous pine trees on the estate, and changed the name to Los Pinos. Today this lovely estate is heavily guarded and not open to the public.





Left **Gardens and fountains** Center **Garden of the Keep** Right **La Batalla de Zacatecas, A. Bolívar**

TOP 10 Castillo de Chapultepec

1 Museo Nacional de Historia – Alcázar Section

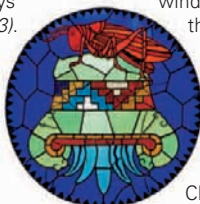
The lavish east wing of the Castillo, known as the Alcázar, was the Presidential Residence and Mansion of Mexican leaders from 1864 through 1939. Today the Alcázar and its gardens have been preserved to illustrate the lifestyle of the early presidents. The personal articles of former Mexican presidents are displayed in 23 opulent rooms with lavish furnishings (see p83).

2 Museo Nacional de Historia – Castillo Section

This section of the museum is based in the oldest portion of the Castillo. The first floor's rooms present Mexico's turbulent history from the Spanish conquest through the Revolution. The second floor has two rooms featuring cultural and social displays from 1759–1917 (see p83).

3 Museo del Caracol

The Galeria de Historia is known as Museo del Caracol because the building is shaped like a snail. A spiral walkway is lined with exhibits that portray the struggle for Mexican independence through the Revolution up to the mid-20th century. ☉ *Section 1, Bosque de Chapultepec • Map E4 • 5061-9241 • 9am–4:15pm Tue–Sun • Adm, free Sun for Mexican residents • www.chapultepec.com.mx*



Stained-glass window

4 Staircase of the Lions

This elegant staircase with marble lions at the base provides access to the rooftop Garden of the Keep. The staircase was built in 1878 to provide access to the National Observatory, and was remodeled in 1906 when the lions and statuary were added.



Staircase of the Lions, Alcázar Section

5 Stained-Glass Windows

The east wing has five exquisite French stained-glass windows. The windows at the top of the Staircase of the Lions have Mexican crests, one of an eagle perched on a cactus devouring a snake, and two with a grasshopper, denoting Chapultepec (Grasshopper) Hill.

6 West Terrace

The terrace on the Castillo's west side is landscaped with a lovely flower garden filled with fountains and statues. The front balcony offers wonderful views of Lago de Chapultepec and vistas out across the park.



7 Main Staircase

A dramatic double staircase with stone steps and wood-capped brass railings leads to the museum's Castillo Section. The upper level is decorated with stunning stained-glass windows and colorful murals.



Mural of the Niños Héroes on main staircase

8 Tall Knight and Garden of the Keep

This lovely formal garden offers views out over the city. The Tall

Knight, in the center of the garden, was added in 1876.

9 South Terrace

This broad terrace is best known for the Monumento a los Niños Héroes which was added in the 1930s. The Fountain of the Grasshopper is located right in the center of this grand, sprawling terrace.

10 Casa de los Espejos

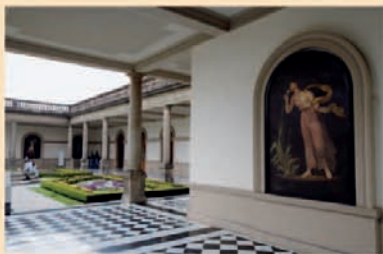
A handsome building, this is also known as the House of Mirrors after the 16 concave and convex mirrors inside. They distort the features of those who look into them. ☼ At the bottom of the road leading to the Castillo

Top 10 Alcázar Rooms

- 1 Dining Room with china from Díaz era
- 2 Ambassadors' Reception Hall with French furniture
- 3 Reading Room with Emperor Maximilian I's monogrammed books
- 4 Game Room collection gifted to Maximilian I
- 5 Smoking Room decorated in 19th-century style
- 6 Carlota's Bedchamber with Maximilian I's magnificent brass bed
- 7 Council Room and the office used by various former presidents
- 8 Díaz's Bedchamber decorated in French Empire style
- 9 Carmen's Bedchamber used by Díaz's wife
- 10 The President's Office used by Díaz

Alcázar

Viceroy Bernardo de Gálvez had the first castle built on Chapultepec Hill in 1785, but the building remained unfinished. In 1841 construction resumed, creating a Military Academy. Emperor Maximilian I came into power in 1864 and refurbished the Castillo as his personal residence, creating a luxurious European-style castle with terraced gardens and patios. Expensive furnishings were ordered from Paris, Vienna, and Italy. Later Porfirio Díaz remodeled and extended the castle. The castle continued to be used as a Presidential Mansion until 1939, when President Lázaro Cárdenas moved to a smaller residence and proclaimed the castle as the headquarters of the National History Museum. In 1940 the eastern section, the Alcázar, became a museum illustrating the lifestyle of the former presidents.



Artwork on the wall of a patio, Alcázar



An upper room of the Museo Nacional de Historia displays a collection of objects acquired from Tsar Nicholas by Porfirio Díaz



Top 10 Museo Nacional de Arte

Presenting the most important Mexican art collection in the world, the Museo Nacional de Arte is housed in a majestic Renaissance-style palacio. The collection includes the Paintings of New Spain (1550–1810), the art of the 19th century – Building the Nation (1810–1900) – and Modern Mexico (1900–1954).



A gallery in the Museo Nacional de Arte

📍 On the top floor to the right of the staircase there is a small orientation room, where you can see the artistic evolution of the famous statues by Tolsá and Sebastián, both known as *El Caballito* (The Little Horse).

🍽️ There are many restaurants nearby. Try Los Girasoles for traditional Mexican food, or Taco Inn for a quick Mexican meal, or Sushi Roll if you prefer Japanese (see p73).

- Map P2
- Tacuba 8, Col Centro
- 5130-3400
- Metro 2, 8 Bellas Artes; Turibus Plaza Manuel Tolsá-Munal #10
- Tue–Sun 10:30am–5:30pm
- 30 pesos, free Sun
- www.munal.com.mx

Top 10 Features

- 1 Palacio de Comunicaciones
- 2 The Virgin of the Apocalypse (1760)
- 3 El Caballito (1803)
- 4 The Torture of Cuauhtémoc (1893)
- 5 The Valley of Mexico from the Santa Isabel Mountain Range (1875)
- 6 Malgré Tout (1898)
- 7 Apotheosis of Peace (1903)
- 8 The Offering (1913)
- 9 The Cloud (1931)
- 10 The Hot-Air Balloon (1930)

1 Palacio de Comunicaciones

Built in an eclectic style the interior of this imposing palacio has a soaring staircase decorated with intricate wrought iron work. Glorious paintings adorn the building's ceilings.

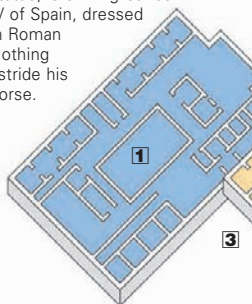
2 The Virgin of the Apocalypse (1760)

Painted at the height of his career, Miguel Cabrera used intense color to portray the theme of *The Virgin of the Apocalypse* triumphing over evil (below).



3 El Caballito (1803)

El Caballito or “The Little Horse,” (above) Manuel Tolsá’s famous statue, is of King Carlos IV of Spain, dressed in Roman clothing astride his horse.



4 The Torture of Cuauhtémoc (1893)

Following the War of Reform in 1861 the new government placed a cultural emphasis on the history of pre-Hispanic Mexico, and by 1893 ancient Mexico was being presented as having had a glorious past. This monumental sized painting (above) by Leandro Izaguirre depicts the legend of Cuauhtémoc, the last Aztec Emperor, and his torture by the Spanish.





5 The Valley of Mexico from the Santa Isabel Mountain Range (1875)

José María Velasco painted this scene directly from nature, a first for this skilled and highly acclaimed landscape artist (above).

7 Apotheosis of Peace (1903)

In this monumental work (below) Alberto Fuster celebrates the years of peace Mexico enjoyed during the reign of Díaz by comparing Mexico to ancient Greece. Neo-Classical in style, the painting mimics the opaque colors found on Renaissance frescos.



9 The Cloud (1931)

Gerardo Murillo, best known as Dr. Atl, is one of the most important Mexican landscape artists. He developed Altcolors, a mixture of pigment and resin that he used on many different surfaces and especially for his landscapes. *The Cloud* was painted at the height of his artistic prowess.

10 The Hot-Air Balloon (1930)

In bright colors and exquisite detail, this painting by Ramón Cano Manilla depicts people in traditional dress, authentic buildings and landscape, and a hot-air balloon decorated in the National colors.

Key

First Floor

Second Floor

Third Floor

Museum Guide

Enter the museum from Plaza Manuel Tolsá, pausing to look at *El Caballito* (The Little Horse), by Manuel Tolsá in the plaza, just in front of the museum.

Proceed to the grand central staircase and walk up to the top floor to admire the stunning mural on the ceiling. Walk into the reception hall straight ahead to look at the ceiling mural there. Walk through the halls on this floor in sequence to get the most out of your visit. Plan to spend most of your time on the second floor where you can see the development of unique Mexican artistic styles.

6 Malgré Tout (1898)

Jesús F. Contreras was one of the first Mexican sculptors to embrace modernism. He studied in France for a time, and familiarized himself with the works of Auguste Rodin. *Malgré Tout*, a magnificent marble sculpture portrays a beautiful woman shackled and bound, still straining and yearning for freedom (below).



8 The Offering (1913)

Saturnino Herrán turned down a scholarship for study in Europe, choosing to remain in Mexico. In this masterpiece of Modernist Nationalism, he captures the unfolding of life. An old man, a youth, and a baby are travelling through life in a

Xochimilco-style barge filled with marigolds, flowers traditionally associated with death (above).





Top 10 Xochimilco Floating Gardens

Every weekend, visitors and the residents of Mexico City flock to Xochimilco to relax, party, and have fun. Aboard colorfully decorated trajineras (flat boats), they enjoy the beauty of these ancient canals built by the Aztecs. The floating gatherings are attended to by food and beverage vendors, musicians, and craft merchants.



Flower vendor

- 🔍 A pedicab is a fun way to reach the *embarcaderos* from Xochimilco village. Bus tours to the floating gardens provide an instant group of friends.

Many of the vendors and musicians wear brilliant costumes or native clothing. Photographers are expected to pay for taking their pictures.

- 🍷 Have a floating picnic and sample the food offered by vendors on boats.

- Map C4
- Nuevo Nativitas, Zacapa, Salitre, and Caltongo, the main *embarcaderos*, are near the center of Xochimilco; *embarcadero Cuernavaca* leads to Parque Ecológico de Xochimilco
- 5676-0810
- Metro 2 to Tasqueña; then Light Rail to the outskirts of Xochimilco village; taxi or pedicab to the *embarcaderos*
- 150 to 200 pesos
- www.xochimilco.df.gob.mx

Top 10 Features

- 1 Boat Ride
- 2 *Embarcaderos* and *Trajineras*
- 3 Floating *Mariachis*
- 4 Shrines
- 5 Floating Food Vendors
- 6 Flowers for Women
- 7 Floating Crafts Vendors
- 8 Flower Gardens and Nurseries
- 9 Parque Ecológico de Xochimilco
- 10 Waterside Markets and Restaurants

1 Boat Ride

A boat trip through the canals in a colorful *trajinera* is the best way to experience the floating gardens of Xochimilco. Explore the festive commercial area as well as the quieter places farther from the landing.



2 Embarcaderos and Trajineras

The flat-bottomed boats are painted with colorful flower motifs. Several *embarcaderos* (boat jetties) are found near the center of town. Nativitas is the largest and busiest.



Colorful *trajineras* at an *embarcadero*



3 Floating Mariachis

Mariachi groups and *marimba* bands travel up and down the canals. On being hired, the leader boards your boat to dance and sing, accompanied by a boatload of musicians tied alongside.





4 Shrines

At the *embarcaderos* and along some canals can be found small, well-decorated shrines filled with flowers honoring the boaters' patron saints.

7 Floating Crafts Vendors

Brilliant rugs, colorful ceramics, and all manner of hand-crafted items and jewelry are also available for sale on small boats. Vendors float by, holding their wares up for all to see, and will come alongside, when invited, to give you a closer look at the selection on offer.



9 Parque Ecológico de Xochimilco

For a different experience, head to *embarcadero* Cuernavaca where you can float in relative peace and quiet through protected areas of pristine natural beauty. It is also popular with birdwatchers.

10 Waterside Markets and Restaurants

The *embarcadero* Nativitas has a bustling shore-side market selling souvenirs and some good restaurants that can be easily reached by boat.



Chinampas

The Xochimilcas devised a unique method of farming. They built rafts with tree limbs and reeds, piled rich lake mud onto the rafts and then planted fast-growing trees with a deep root system in the soil. As the trees grew, the rafts became anchored to the lake bed. These *chinampas*, or floating gardens, were soon thriving, growing crops and flowers. After the Spanish conquest, Xochimilco was spared destruction because it was the main source of the city's food.

5 Floating Food Vendors

Vendors in small boats offer food for your table. Many have kitchens onboard with hot soup pots or grills to serve freshly cooked favorites. Other boats supply beer and soft drinks.

6 Flowers for Women

It is traditional to give flowers to the women in your party, and flower sellers float past offering a selection of colorful blooms.

8 Flower Gardens and Nurseries

Flower gardens, greenhouses, and nurseries are found all along the banks of the canals. The flowers grown here are shipped to Mexico City and throughout the Americas.



Widened for the 1968 Olympics, the canals near Cuernavaca are favored by kayakers and rowing teams



Top 10 Villa de Guadalupe

The holiest Roman Catholic shrine in Latin America is also the most visited in the world. It was here in 1531 that an Aztec peasant named Juan Diego claimed to have seen a vision of the beautiful Virgin who requested that a chapel be built. Over the centuries, pilgrims and the faithful have come to worship the Virgin of Guadalupe.



Carrillón, the stone cross, Villa de Guadalupe

Día de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe (Dec 12) is a national holiday and the busiest day of the year with thousands of pilgrims making the trip to Villa de Guadalupe. December is also the busiest month.

The shop in the Nueva Basílica sells an excellent selection of religious objects, books, and prints.

Food is available from many street vendors in the area, but a better bet is to eat before or after your visit.

- Map C2
- Plaza de las Américas 1
- 5577-6022
- Metro 6 La Villa-Basílica
- 6am–9pm daily
- Free; Museum 5 pesos
- www.virgendeguadalupe.org.mx

Top 10 Features

- 1 Nueva Basílica
- 2 Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe
- 3 Antigua Basílica
- 4 Parroquia de Capuchinas
- 5 Museo de la Basílica de Guadalupe
- 6 Parroquia de Indios
- 7 Capilla del Pocito
- 8 Tepeyac
- 9 Garden and Walkway
- 10 Carrillón

1 Nueva Basílica
This new basilica was consecrated in 1976. The ground here is very soft, and the circular design, symbolizing the universality of God, also helps in evenly distributing the weight of the church (*below*).

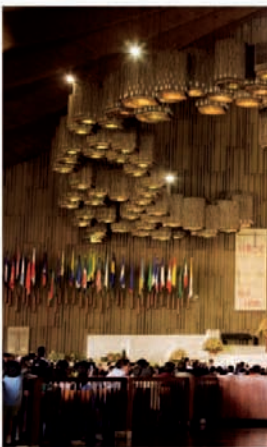


2 Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe

The original image of the Virgin on the cloak of Juan Diego (*right*) is mounted high on the wall behind the main altar. Viewers stand on moving walkways that pass below the image.



Interior, Iglesia del Cerrito, Tepeyac (Little Hill)



3 Antigua Basílica
This Baroque temple with four towers and a central tiled dome was consecrated in 1709. Designed by Pedro de Arrieta, the four domed-towers and other design elements are similar to those found in the temple of Solomon in Jerusalem. In 1904 it became a basilica in recognition of the devotion of the faithful.

It was reopened in 2000 after being closed for many years while structural supports were added to protect it from the ever increasing tilt as it sank into the soft soil.

Pedro Ramírez Vázquez, the famous Mexican architect, designed the Nueva Basílica





5 Museo de la Basilica de Guadalupe

The collections in this interesting museum are primarily of artistic religious objects related to Our Lady of Guadalupe. There are paintings, sculptures, textiles, and carvings. There is also a collection of paintings by artists including Cabrera, Villalpando, and Correa.



6 Parroquia de Indios

This chapel dates from 1649 and in the small sacristy on the right can be seen the remains of the foundations of the original chapel built in 1531. Juan Diego lived his final years in this place, and the chapel is frequently referred to as the Chapel of Juan Diego (below).



7 Capilla del Pocito

Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared to Juan Diego at the spring housed in this lovely circular chapel. Built in 1791, the dome is decorated with blue and white tiles.

Juan Diego's Vision

When Juan Diego told the local bishop about the story of the vision, he was met with skepticism. The Virgin reappeared to Diego and told him to gather flowers, and although it was winter, Spanish roses were blooming at Tepeyac. When Diego opened his cloak to show the bishop the unseasonal flowers, an image of the Virgin was miraculously imprinted on his cloak. The prelate was convinced.

4 Parroquia de Capuchinas

Initially a convent for Capuchin nuns and then used as a hospital, it became a parish church in 1929 (above).



9 Garden and Walkway

A tiled walkway with stairs and ramps was built to direct the flow of people to the Little Hill. Near the base of the staircase leading up the hill is a lovely rose garden. The path returning from The Little Hill curves through a large garden area with fountains and statues (below).



8 Tepeyac

Juan Diego found the roses which appeared miraculously in winter on the top of Tepeyac, the Little Hill. Capilla del Cerrito was built in 1749 on the site. Fernando Leal painted seven murals depicting the story of the appearance of the Virgin to Juan Diego.

10 Carrillón

The huge stone cross at the far end of the plaza has bells that ring every hour, and has four different ways of telling time. There is a modern clock, an astronomical clock, a sun dial, and an Aztec calendar clock with 18 months of 20 days.



Juan Diego was canonized in 2002, becoming the first indigenous saint in the Americas



Top 10 Teotihuacán

Founded around 100 BC, Teotihuacán became Mesoamerica's cultural and commercial center. At its peak – around AD 650 – it covered 8 sq miles (20 sq km) and included pyramids, temples, and housing for 200,000 people. However, very little is known about this great civilization and why they eventually abandoned the city.



Jaguar Mural, along the Avenue of the Dead

- Many Mexico City travel agencies offer sightseeing bus tours to Teotihuacán daily.

The best view of the ruins is from the top of the Pyramid of the Moon.

There is a tram that stops at the major attractions.

- There is a restaurant and café at the Visitor Center.

- Mexico State: Las Pirámides, Mex 132D (toll), 29 miles (47 km) NE of Mexico City
- (594) 956-0052
- Metro 5 to Autobuses del Norte. Then take Bus marked "Pirámides" from Central de Autobuses del Norte in Mexico City
- 7am–5pm
- 45 pesos
- Museum 10am–5pm daily, 37 pesos; free Sun; tram 10 pesos
- www.visitmexico.com

Top 10 Features

- 1 Pyramid of the Sun
- 2 Pyramid of the Moon
- 3 Avenue of the Dead
- 4 Quetzalpapaotl Palace Complex
- 5 Temple of Quetzalcoatl
- 6 Museum
- 7 Ciudadela
- 8 Palace of Tēmantitla
- 9 Tetitla
- 10 Atetelco

1 Pyramid of the Sun

The pyramid's base measures 738 ft (225 m) along each side. A tunnel under the main staircase leads to small chambers of ceremonial importance. A monumental staircase with 248 steep steps and five landings rises 213 ft (65 m) to a flat platform that once supported a temple.

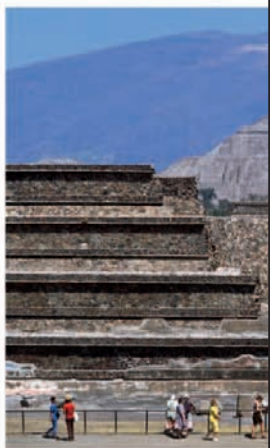


2 Pyramid of the Moon

The oldest and most important pyramid stands at the north end of the Avenue of the Dead (above). Archeological excavations have revealed several burial sites within, that have sacrificial victims and exquisite offerings.



Partially restored mural depicting feathered coyotes



3 Avenue of the Dead

From the Pyramid of the Moon a 1-mile (2-km) long road leads to the Citadel, and continues another 2 miles (3 km) beyond the excavations. The 131-ft (40-m) wide road is lined with nearly identical buildings which the Aztecs mistakenly believed to be tombs when they named the road. Archeologists believe that these were used to house civic, government, and religious functions (below).





4 Quetzalpapalotl Palace Complex

Three main palaces in the complex are believed to have been the residence of the Pyramid of the Moon's High Priest (see p34).

6 Museum
The museum displays artifacts found on-site, as well as archeology, architecture, and history exhibits (right). The glass floor in the main room covers a scale model of the site. Outside, the shady botanical garden is an excellent place to relax.



9 Tetitla
Located west of the loop road, this complex of dwellings illustrates how buildings were constructed and reconstructed over hundreds of years. Fragments of intricate murals adorn many of the walls within this compound.

10 Atetelco
This major dwelling complex has its own small altar, and many finely detailed murals depicting jaguars, coyotes, birds, and human figures. The complex is located to the west across the loop road.



5 Temple of Quetzalcoatl

The pyramid built around AD 200 is ornately decorated with sculptures of feathered serpents (below), the rain god Tláloc, and the mythical crocodile-like symbols for fertile land. Numerous grave sites containing sacrificial victims and soldiers have been found within the pyramid.



7 Ciudadela
This huge compound with its massive central pyramid is surrounded by walls that measure 1,312 ft (400 m) on each side. The massive walls of the compound are 23-ft (7-m) high with pyramidal structures on top.

8 Palace of Temantitla
The most important and colorful murals of the site cover the walls of this dwelling complex. Richly detailed red, green, and yellow murals depict Tláloc and his watery universe. Other murals include a priest sowing seeds and people swimming and playing.

Site Guide

You can park in any of the five parking lots. Lot #1 is the closest to the Visitor Center. Across the road is the Citadel and Temple of Quetzalcoatl. Head north along the Avenue of the Dead, and turn to the right to visit the museum. Next proceed to the Pyramid of the Sun. Continue down the Avenue of the Dead to see the Jaguar Mural on the right side of the road and then the Pyramid of the Moon at the north end of the Avenue. Finally, explore the structures of the nearby Quetzalpapalotl Palace and complex.



Visit the Museo Nacional de Antropología to see more of the objects found at Teotihuacán see pp8-9



Left **Mural, Jaguar Palace** Center **Palace of Quetzalpapalotl** Right **Mural of a parrot-like bird**

TOP 10 Quetzalpapalotl Palace Complex

1 Plaza of the Moon

One of the sacred ceremonial areas in the city, the plaza lies between the Pyramid of the Moon and the Avenue of the Dead. The entrance to the Quetzalpapalotl Palace Complex is reached from the southwest corner of the plaza.

2 Entrance to the Palace of Quetzalpapalotl

A wide stone staircase leads from the Plaza of the Moon up to the covered east portico supported by large columns. The portico opens into a great antechamber that leads into the main palace complex.

3 Stone Serpent's Head

Near the top of the broad stone staircase leading to the portico, a huge carved stone serpent's head emerges from the wall in a position of prominence.



Stone serpent's head

4 Palace of Quetzalpapalotl

The largest and most elegant structure in the palace complex, this is believed to have been the high priest's residence. The original roof burned in the fires that swept the city in about AD 750.

5 Patio of the Pillars

The Palace of Quetzalpapalotl is named after the carved bird-butterfly figures that adorn the pillars of the inner portico.

6 Decorative Merlons

The top inner rim of the portico in the Patio of Pillars features numerous ornately carved stone merlons (battlements) decorated with bas-relief symbols of the calendar.

7 Temple of the Feathered Conches

This temple, located on a level below the palace, features an ornately carved stone façade and pillars decorated with bands of feathered conches and borders of four-petal flower motifs.

8 Mural of Parrot-like Bird

On the staircase leading to the three-sided courtyard in front of the Temple of the Feathered Conches is a brilliantly colored mural of a parrot-like bird watering a flower with its beak.

9 Jaguar Palace

The palace consists of a large open plaza in front of the middle temple.

The nearby staircases have ramps shaped like snakes, while the sloping walls have murals of jaguars in various poses.

10 Jaguar Murals

Murals of jaguars, blowing feathered conch shells and with seashells on their flanks, adorn the sloping walls of a few rooms in the palace. In other murals, jaguars are seen lying in nets in a woman's arms.

Top 10 Stages of Development

- 1 200–150 BC: Small scattered agricultural settlements
- 2 150–0 BC: Construction of the Ceremonial Center, Sun Pyramid, and Moon Pyramid begins
- 3 AD 0–150: Completion of Sun and Moon Pyramids
- 4 AD 150–200: Planned city developed on a geometric grid; new buildings attached to Sun and Moon Pyramids
- 5 AD 200–450: Consolidation of state; government establishes control over economic, political, and religious systems
- 6 AD 450–650: Flourishing economy, expansion of buildings, murals painted, and external expansion of the state
- 7 AD 650–750: Population growth and limited agricultural land pose serious internal crises; colonization and demand for tribute emerge as external threats
- 8 AD 750–800: Decline of the power structure and migration of the officials; the city is damaged by a huge fire
- 9 AD 800–950: Population greatly diminished; city is in ruins and mostly abandoned
- 10 After AD 950: Toltec and later Aztec groups hold the ruins as sacred and use for their own religious ceremonies

History of Teotihuacán

Mystery surrounds the origins and language of the people who built the magnificent city of Teotihuacán, and how this great city came to be abandoned. Archeological discoveries show that an influx of people from other regions that occurred in 200 BC resulted in a reorganization of the agri-



Bones found in the site

cultural groups inhabiting the valley and development of the new planned city. The Ceremonial Center contains the oldest buildings, with the Pyramid of the Moon being built first, and the Temple of Quetzalcoatl the last. The city was laid out on a grid pattern, with the Avenue of the Dead running north and south, and an east-west road bisecting the city. All of the buildings were constructed in the Talud-Tablero style, and sophisticated drainage and sewage systems were built. Religion was very important, and some of the gods honored were Tláloc, god of Rain, Chalchiuhtlicue, goddess of Water, and Quetzalcoatl, the Feathered Serpent. Home to many skilled artisans and tradesmen, Teotihuacán developed trade throughout Mesoamerica, as its government also extended their rule over neighboring areas. Drought, over-population, disease, and social unrest have all been suggested as causes of the city's decline, which started about AD 650. An extensive fire around AD 750 engulfed much of the city. The buildings were never rebuilt and gradually the city was abandoned.



Detail of a wall in the Quetzalpapalotl Palace Complex









Left **The Aztec legend** Center **Moctezuma II meets Cortés** Right **Pancho Villa**

TOP 10 Moments in History

1 Early Inhabitants

A fertile volcanic valley with abundant resources, a long growing season, and pleasant climate gave rise to the sophisticated culture that built Teotihuacán (*see pp32–3*), once the largest metropolis in the Western Hemisphere. Teotihuacán was a planned city with straight roads, plazas, government buildings, and spectacular ceremonial pyramids. The city reached the height of its powers in AD 550, but was abandoned in around AD 750.

2 Aztec Empire

The Aztecs arrived from the north, initially as mercenaries and workers. Around 1325 their god Huitzilopochtli advised them to settle where they found an eagle on a cactus devouring a snake. This they observed in Tenochtitlán. The Aztecs were ruthless fighters and by the 1420s controlled the beautiful and extensive city. They developed a firm hierarchy with an emperor, and their conquests spread to the east and south.

3 Spanish Conquest

Hernán Cortés, the Spanish conquistador, landed with his troops near Veracruz in 1519. As he marched toward Tenochtitlán, then ruled by Moctezuma II, he joined forces with the Tlaxcalans, a strong tribe that resisted Aztec dominance. After a bloody and destructive siege in 1521, Cortés was able to defeat the Aztecs.

4 Colonial Capital

The Spanish built Mexico City on top of the ruins of Tenochtitlán. Silver mined all over Mexico fueled the city's expansion and the building of large palaces. When the silver industry declined, the city stagnated for much of the 17th and early 18th century.

5 Mexican Independence

On September 16, 1810, Padre Miguel Hidalgo famously called for independence from Spain. But the city remained a royalist holdout until 1824 when a federal republic, the United States of Mexico, was formed. Turbulent years followed and from 1833 to 1855 Santa Anna became president 11 times.



Priest and revolutionist crowning Mexico

6 US Invasion

The USA invaded Mexico in 1847 and occupied Mexico City for ten months. During the battles in Bosque de Chapultepec (*see pp22–3*), six young cadets, the *Niños Héroes*, leapt to their death rather than be captured.





The Storming of Chapultepec, 1847

7 War of Reform

Mexico's most loved leader, Benito Juárez, came to power in 1855. He enacted laws that restricted the power of the Church. A bitter war ensued, and finally in 1861 the liberals won and Juárez was elected President.

8 The Maximilian Affair

In 1863, a French army invaded Mexico and the brief rule of Austrian Emperor Maximilian I began before he was deposed and executed in 1867. In those four years he remodelled the Castillo de Chapultepec (see pp24–5) and built the boulevard, today called Paseo de la Reforma (see pp74–7). After the Republic was restored, Juárez returned to power until his death in 1872.

9 Mexican Revolution

Dictator Porfirio Díaz came to power in 1872. Authoritarian yet visionary, he modernized the education and transportation systems. But the divide between rich and poor increased, and when the Díaz government annulled the 1910 victory by opponent Francisco I. Madero, the Mexican Revolution began.

10 Twentieth Century Growth and Reform

The Revolution ended with Álvaro Obregón taking control in 1920. Under the ensuing stable government, Mexico flourished and its capital grew exponentially, and it continues to grow today.

Top 10 Historical Figures

1 Emperor Moctezuma II (1466–1520)

Expanded the Aztec empire. The Spanish captured him in a battle and later killed him.

2 Hernán Cortés (1485–1547)

His successful invasion of Mexico began the Spanish colonization of the Americas.

3 La Malinche (1496–1529)

The indigenous woman who accompanied Cortés as interpreter and advisor (see p90).

4 Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla (1753–1811)

A priest, he is famous for his call to arms for independence.

5 Santa Anna (1794–1876)

Mexican military leader and 11 time president – the last in 1853.

6 Benito Juárez (1806–72)

The most loved president, he restored the republic and modernized Mexico.

7 Emperor Maximilian I (1832–67)

From Austria's imperial family, he briefly became Emperor in 1864 before being executed.

8 Porfirio Díaz (1830–1915)

Army general and president, he initiated many reforms and modernized Mexico.

9 Pancho Villa (1878–1923)

Mexican folk hero, he was one of the foremost leaders of the Mexican Revolution.

10 Francisco I. Madero (1873–1913)

A politician, he opposed the rule of Porfirio Díaz but was soon deposed and executed.





Left Courtyard, Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso Right Gardens, Castillo de Chapultepec

TOP 10 Historic Sites**1 Iglesia y Hospital de Jesús Nazareno**

The tomb of Hernán Cortés lies here. To the rear of the church is the place where Moctezuma II met Cortés in 1519. Half a block south is the Hospital de Jesús Nazareno, built on Cortés' command in 1524 to treat Spanish soldiers. ☎ 20 de Noviembre 82 • Map Q4

• 5542-6501 • 9am–6pm Mon–Sat • Free

**Casa de la Primera Imprenta de América****5 Casa de la Primera Imprenta de América**

Constructed in 1524, the first printing press in the Americas was installed here in 1534 by Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza. Today, the house displays a model of the press and hosts temporary exhibits.

☎ Licenciado Verdad 10 and Moneda • Map Q2 • 5522-1535 • 10am–6pm daily • Free

2 Castillo de Chapultepec

In 1841 the building was repaired and adapted for use as a military academy. The last battle of the US invasion of Mexico in 1847 was fought here (see pp24–5).

3 Palacio Nacional

Originally the site of Aztec Emperor Moctezuma II's palace, Cortés built his own palace there after his victory. In 1562 it became the residence of Mexico's viceroys and the headquarters for all of Spain's colonial government in Mexico (see pp14–15).

4 Paseo de la Reforma

The boulevard was built in the 1860s by Emperor Maximilian I to connect Castillo de Chapultepec, his official residence, with the Palacio Nacional. First known as the Causeway of the Empress, it was inspired by the Champs-Élysées in Paris. It was renamed after the restoration of the Republic in 1867 (see pp74–7).

6 Zócalo

This is the most important plaza in Mexico. The cultural, political, and historical center of the city, it is also known as the Plaza de la Constitución. It was called Zócalo after only the plinth (zócalo) was laid of an independence monument commissioned by President Santa Anna in 1843, but never completed (see p67).

7 Parque Alameda Central

This is the city's oldest park with elegant fountains and shady paths. It was once reserved for the exclusive use of the aristocracy. That practice ended after the War of Mexican Independence in 1821 (see p68).

**Fountain, Parque Alameda Central**

8 Palacio de Bellas Artes

It was conceived by Porfirio Díaz to be the cultural showpiece of his regime, and construction began in 1904. But, swampy subsoil and the onset of the Mexican Revolution stopped work. By 1916 only the grand façades were completed. Construction resumed in 1932, and the building was completed in 1934 (see pp20–21).

9 Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso

Originally built by Jesuit friars in 1588, the property was seized by the Spanish in 1767. After independence it became a National Preparatory School. Elected president in 1920, the reformist Álvaro Obregón wanted art to mend the country and by 1922 muralists were hired to decorate the interior walls. Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and José Clemente Orozco painted some of the best examples of Mexico's muralist movement here (see p68).



Plaza Santo Domingo

10 Plaza Santo Domingo

One of the oldest colonial plazas, it is best known today for the Portal de los Evangelistas, where public scribes still write business and love letters for the city's poor and illiterate. In the colonial era the plaza was surrounded by the Church and Convent of Santo Domingo, the Palace of Inquisition, and Customs Tax Collectors. ☎ Map Q2

Top 10 Pre-Hispanic Sites

1 Teotihuacán

The site comprises 8 sq miles (20 sq km) of pyramids and temple ruins (see pp32–3).

2 Tlatelolco

The most important Aztec market of Mesoamerica, now known as Plaza de las Tres Culturas (see p95).

3 Templo Mayor

The largest and most important temple stood at the center of Tenochtitlán (see pp16–17).

4 Zócalo

Major market area and site of festivities during the Aztec Empire (see p67).

5 Pirámide de Cuicuilco

An unusual circular pyramid at Cuicuilco, the earliest known city in the Valley of Mexico. ☎ 5606-9758 • 9am–5pm daily • Free

6 Xochimilco

The canals and floating gardens were created by the Xochimilcas (see pp28–9).

7 Museo Nacional de Antropología

Fascinating artifacts from different pre-Hispanic cultures of Mexico are displayed here (see pp8–9).

8 Chapultepec

The highest hill in the central valley, it was a Toltec settlement (see pp82–5).

9 Tenayuca

Pre-Aztec pyramid with two parallel stairways leading to the temples at the top. ☎ Map B1 • 10am–5pm Tue–Sun • Adm for museum

10 Acatitlán

One of the few intact pyramid temples in Mexico. ☎ Map B1 • 10am–5pm Tue–Sun • Adm for museum



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Left **Museo Nacional de Arte** Right **Hall, Museo Franz Mayer****TOP 10 Museums****1 Museo Nacional de Antropología**

The largest museum in Latin America presents a great display of archeological discoveries. Each of the museum's halls represents one of the country's prominent pre-Hispanic cultures, including Aztec, Toltec, Mayan, and eight others (*see pp8–9*).

**Museo Nacional de Antropología****2 Museo de Arte Moderno**

Mexico's important contributions to 20th-century Modern Art are displayed here. The artists include Diego Rivera, José Clemente Orozco, David Alfaro Siqueiros, Juan O'Gorman, Rufino Tamayo, and Frida Kahlo. Don't miss the large sculptures in the exterior garden (*see p83*).

3 Museo Dolores Olmedo

Known for its collection of 145 works by Diego Rivera that span his entire career, this stunning 17th-century hacienda is also a house-museum with notable pre-Hispanic and Mexican folk art collections. It also houses some of Frida Kahlo's work (*see p95*).

4 Museo Franz Mayer

This museum houses an incredible collection of decorative furnishings from the 16th through the 19th century. Gleaned from around the world by Franz Mayer, the collection contains exquisite examples of furniture and textiles, silver, ceramics, art, and sculpture. Highlights include a 19th-century Mexican silk shawl and an 18th-century earthenware bowl (*see p68*).

5 Museo Frida Kahlo

Paintings by Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera are displayed in Frida's blue house, where she lived and painted. Frida's illustrated diary is here, as well as some early sketches, still lifes, and unfinished portraits. Rivera's landscape *La Quebrada* (1956) is also here (*see p89*).

**Museo Frida Kahlo****6 Museo Nacional de Arte**

This museum houses the best collection of four centuries of Mexican art. Featured are masterpieces by the greatest of the Mexican artists including the famous muralists, landscape, and religious artists (*see pp26–7*).



7 Museo Rufino Tamayo

A fabulous collection of modern art and sculpture by internationally recognized artists is housed in this dramatic concrete and white marble building set in the woods of Bosque de Chapultepec. The collection features works by internationally renowned artists Pablo Picasso, Mark Rothko, Joan Miro, Fernando Botero, Isamu Noguchi, and many others. The museum also plays host to world-class traveling art exhibitions several times a year (see p83).



Museo Rufino Tamayo

8 Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil

The permanent collection features paintings by early 20th-century Mexican masters, with a large number of oils by José Clemente Orozco and David Alfaro Siqueiros. These works have amazing scope, including portraits, still lifes, and political subjects. Diego Rivera's cubist-style, 1916-painting, *El Arquitecto*, is here as well. The museum is respected for its exhibitions of contemporary work by international and Mexican artists (see p91).

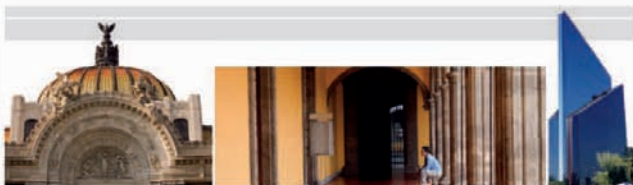
9 Templo Mayor

The centerpiece of this museum is the huge stone disk depicting the dismembered moon goddess Coyolxauhqui. The accidental discovery of this artifact triggered the massive excavation of the ruins of the Templo Mayor. Many of the offerings left in the temples for the gods are on display, including delicate ceramic objects, human skulls adorned with shell and flint, and the decorated knives of flint and obsidian that were used during human sacrifices. Antiquities collected by the Aztecs from earlier pre-Hispanic cities are also displayed (see pp16–17).

10 Museo Nacional de Historia

This museum has two sections – the Alcázar and the Castillo. The vast collections of the museum are housed in the rooms of Castillo de Chapultepec, the former residence of Mexican presidents. The fascinating collections cover four centuries and are arranged chronologically. The Alcázar section is an astonishing house-museum which preserves the lavish lifestyle of Mexico's leaders from 1864 to 1939. The Castillo section offers a glimpse into the turbulent history of Mexico between the Spanish conquest under Cortés and the Mexican Revolution (see p83).



Left **Palacio de Bellas Artes** Center **Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso** Right **BMW****TOP 10 Architectural Highlights**

1 Catedral Metropolitana
This magnificent cathedral reflects the changing architectural styles during its two centuries of construction. Work began in 1573, and continued until 1813. Among other styles, Baroque, Neo-Classical, and Churrigueresque are most evident (*see pp12–13*).

**Catedral Metropolitana**

2 Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso
This imposing colonial building, with beautiful courtyards, dates from 1588. It has three stories, an impressive Baroque section with spacious patios, and a smaller part, completed in 1931, with a façade inspired by 18th-century architecture (*see p68*).

3 Palacio de Minería
Manuel Tolsá designed this important Neo-Classical building in 1813. Highlights include the Old Chapel, Assembly Room, Dean's Gallery, Library, and the magnificent staircase. 📍 *Tacuba 5*
• Map P2 • 5623-2981 • Tolsá Museum; 10am–6pm Wed–Sun • Adm • www.palaciomineria.unam.mx

4 Palacio de Bellas Artes
Italian architect Adamo Boari planned this masterpiece of Art Nouveau construction. The exterior is a grand representation of Porfiriano architecture, named after President Porfirio Díaz who commissioned the building. The white Carrara marble building has a gleaming triple dome in bronze and an Aztec-influenced Art Deco interior resplendent with red marble (*see pp20–21*).

5 Lotería Nacional
Innovative engineering and Art Deco design elements are highlights of this 1936 building designed by José Antonio Cuevas. It is the first building that used elastic flotation for earthquake protection. 📍 *Plaza de la Reforma 1* • Map M2 • 5140-7010
• www.loterianacional.gob.mx

**Lotería Nacional**

6 Casa de los Azulejos
This 16th-century residence, in Churrigueresque style, was the Blue Palace until, in the 18th century, the exterior was covered with blue tiles. It is now called the House of Tiles. 📍 *Madereo 4* • Map P2 • 5512-7824 • 7am–11pm



7 Museo Casa Barragán

This home and studio, designed by architect Luis Barragán in 1947, was designated a UNESCO world heritage site in 2004. The simple masonry building features an orthogonal floorplan with walls painted in bold colors. Light and shadow interplay with the colors and angles, creating dramatic patterns. 📍 *General Francisco Ramírez 14, Col Ampliación Daniel Garza • Map D6 • 5515-4908 • 10am–2pm 4–6pm Mon–Fri, 10am–1pm Sat, by appointment only • Adm • <http://casaluisbarragan.org>*

8 Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM)

In the late 1940s, 60 architects were enlisted to design 20 buildings and sports complexes for the new university to the south of Mexico City. The highlight is the Central Library designed by Juan O'Gorman. 📍 *Ciudad Universitaria • Map B3 • 5622-1086 • 8am–8:30pm daily • Free • Closed public holidays • <http://unam.mx>*

9 Bolsa Mexicana de Valores (BMV)

To an unfinished structure planned as a hotel, the architect Juan José Díaz added height, giving it an angled appearance. The dramatic wedge-shaped tower and spherical dome of the Mexican Stock Exchange are covered with

shimmering black and dark blue mirrored glass. Trading takes place under the dome, while the offices are located in the tower.

📍 *Paseo de la Reforma 255 • Map J4 • <http://bm.com.mx>*



Torre Mayor with the Diana Fountain in front

10 Torre Mayor

Mexico City's tallest building towers 740 ft (225 m) on the Paseo de la Reforma. The gracefully curved front façade is made with 323,000 sq ft (30,000 sq m) of glass, and supported by a traditional granite skyscraper. The design of this 55-story contemporary office building uses anti-seismic technology in order to help it withstand an earthquake of up to 8.5 on the Richter scale. 📍 *Paseo de la Reforma 505 • Map F3 • www.torremayor.com.mx*





Left Lago Mayor, Bosque de Chapultepec Right Parque Alameda Central

TOP 10 Parks, Gardens, and Courtyards

1 Bosque de Chapultepec
This huge and diverse urban park offers a fantastic selection of activities and makes a perfect escape from the hustle and bustle of the city. Most of the major museums and the zoo are located in the first section. Two other sections offer more green space, fewer visitors, and are ideal for walking, cycling, and boating (see pp22–3).

2 Parque Alameda Central
Landscaped with poplar, ash, willow, and jacaranda trees, this lovely green park is a shady oasis adorned with fountains, sculptures, and paved walkways that attract both locals and tourists (see p68).



Obregón Memorial, Jardín de la Bombilla

3 Parque México
This park is a great place for joggers and walkers who want to avoid the crowds. Built on the site of a former horse racetrack, the large park has attractive landscaping and shady paths.

☉ Av México and Av Sonora, Col Condesa • Map H5

4 Parque Ecológico de Xochimilco

This less-commercialized zone of Xochimilco provides a view of the ancient system of water canals and man-made islands developed by the Aztecs. Flower gardens and a bird preserve are added attractions (see p28–9).

5 Jardín de la Tercera Edad and Jardín Botánico

Set aside for senior citizens, Jardín de la Tercera Edad is the oldest botanical garden within Bosque de Chapultepec. There is a walking path lined with 36 sculptures, an orchid pavilion, and a greenhouse. There is also a public garden, Jardín Botánico, with a lush tropical conservatory. ☉ Paseo de la Reforma and Calzada Chivatito

• Map D3, D4

6 Jardín de la Bombilla

This peaceful San Ángel park has walking paths and benches beneath shade trees. In the center of the park there is a huge monument in memory

of Álvaro Obregón, hero of the Mexican Revolution, who became President in 1920. ☉ Av Insurgentes Sur and Arenal • Map T3



Parque México



7 Jardín del Centenario
The atrium of the former convent of the church of San Juan Bautista is today a lovely town park in Coyoacán. In the center of the park stands the Fountain of Coyoacán with sculptures of two coyotes. ☎ *Centenario and Felipe Carillo Puerto • Map W2*



Archway, Jardín del Centenario

8 Viveros de Coyoacán
Once the private nurseries of environmentalist Miguel Ángel de Quevedo, today it raises seedling trees for the entire city. Joggers and walkers enjoy the mile-long dirt path that curves through the park. It is also popular with bird-watchers. ☎ *Map V2 • 8am–5pm daily*

9 Parque Hundido
A favorite with walkers and joggers, the park was formerly a clay-quarry. More than 50 replicas of pre-Columbian sculpture were placed along the pathways in the 1970s. ☎ *Av Insurgentes Sur and Av Porfirio Díaz • Map B3*

10 Jardín Botánico
This botanical garden, located next to the University (UNAM) Stadium, features Mexican flora and ornamental plants. The garden is organized by climate zones. The specialty gardens for medicinal and native plants are highlights here. There is also a greenhouse in the garden (see p45).

Top 10 Courtyards and Small Gardens

1 Plaza de la Santa Veracruz
A quiet, pleasant spot to sit and listen to the fountain. ☎ *Av Hidalgo • Map N2*

2 Museo Franz Mayer Courtyard
Surrounded by two-story porticoes it has a central, tiled stone fountain (see p68).

3 Jardín Botánico in Palacio Nacional
This large inner courtyard has large, beautiful gardens (see pp14–15).

4 Sculpture Garden
A garden plaza with ten huge bronze sculptures. ☎ *Av Francisco I. Madero*

5 Jardín de la Solidaridad
Commemorates the people who lost their lives in the devastating 1985 earthquake. ☎ *Zarco y Hidalgo*

6 Gardens of Palacio de Bellas Artes
These flower gardens are ideal to enjoy the surrounding beauty (see pp20–21).

7 Courtyard of San Angel Inn
Inner courtyard of the former monastery (see p93).

8 Courtyard of the Museo SCHP
An inner courtyard with ancient trees and stone fountains (see p69).

9 Parque Lincoln
This park has a botanical garden, ponds, and an art gallery. ☎ *Emilio Castelar and Luis G. Urbina*

10 Monastery Gardens at Parque Nacional Desierto de los Leones
The gardens are ideal to listen to birdsong (see p96).





Left **Altar, Templo de la Enseñanza** Right **Catedral Metropolitana**

TOP 10 Churches

1 Antigua Basílica de Guadalupe

This basilica honors the Virgin of Guadalupe, Mexico's patron saint. In 1531 the Virgin appeared to a native, Juan Diego, requesting a church be built there. Diego convinced the local priest by showing him a cape bearing the image of the Virgin. Antigua Basílica de Guadalupe was built in 1709. The cape is displayed in the new basilica, built in 1976 (*see pp30–31*).



Antigua Basílica de Guadalupe

columns and a marble carving of Santo Domingo de Guzmán above the entrance. The main altar was created by Manuel Tolsá. A side chapel contains colorful scarves left by those who have experienced a personal miracle.

📍 *República de Brasil and Belisario Domínguez • Map Q1*

2 Catedral Metropolitana

The largest colonial cathedral in the Americas dominates the Zócalo in the center of Mexico City. The Spanish Baroque façade, with 18 bells in its twin bell towers, only hints at the splendor inside (*see pp12–13*).



Templo de Santo Domingo

3 Templo de Santo Domingo

The first Dominican church in the city was built here in 1530. The current Baroque church was built in 1736 with ornately carved

4 Templo de la Enseñanza

Nine fabulous ultra-Baroque altarpieces fill the interior of this small church built in the 1770s. Angels surround the *Virgin of El Pilar* in the exceptional fresco adorning the high-domed ceiling above the golden main altar featuring statues of saints. The elaborate late-Baroque façade is unusually narrow and tilts backward from uneven settling.

📍 *Donceles 104 • Map Q2 • 7:30–8pm Mon–Sat, 10am–2pm Sun*

5 Iglesia y Ex-Convento de San Francisco

One of the best Churrigueresque façades in the city adorns the remnants of the High Convent of Our Holy Father St. Francis of Mexico. Once the largest monastery in the city, it was largely destroyed after the Reform Laws were passed in the late 1850s (*see p39*). Today the lovely main church has a Neo-Classical altar, stained-glass windows, and fine wood sculptures by Miguel Ángel Soto. 📍 *Madero 7 • Map P3*

6 Iglesia de la Profesa (San Felipe Neri)

The Mudéjar roof above the choir stalls is the only visible remains of the original 1610 Jesuit church. The church was rebuilt in 1720 and is one of the finest examples of Mexican Baroque architecture. The Neo-Classical altarpiece was created by Manuel Tolsá. 📍 *Madero and Isabel la Católica* • Map P2



Iglesia de la Profesa

7 Templo de Regina Coeli

This masterpiece of Churrigueresque style dates from the 17th century. Three of the five altars display paintings by famous 18th-century artists, including Villalpando and Rodríguez Juárez. The elegant main altar is dedicated to Regina Coeli (Queen of Heaven) and has a fine painting of the Virgin in the center. 📍 *Regina and Bolívar* • Map P4

8 Parroquia de San Bernardino de Siena

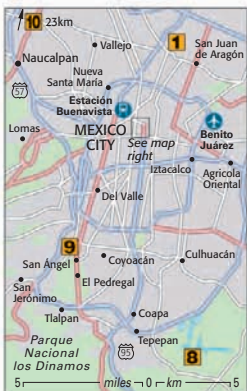
Dedicated to Saint Bernardine of Siena, who is believed to have interceded with God on behalf of the indigenous Mexican people, this Xochimilco church is best known for its exceptional 16th-century altarpiece (see p97).

9 Ex-Convento e Iglesia del Carmen

This Carmelite church from the early 1600s was part of the del Carmen Convent. Three exterior domes decorated with colorful tiles dominate the roofline. Built in Latin Cross form, the interior walls of this narrow church are partially tiled with frescos. The colonial-era main altar is the interior's highlight (see p90).

10 Iglesia de San Francisco Javier

This exceptional Mexican Baroque church was constructed in the late 1600s. The limestone façade and single-bell tower are decorated with ornately detailed stone carvings. Inside, the golden main altar is resplendent with fine decorations. Murals by Miguel Cabrera adorn the cross vaults and the chancel (see p62).



Iglesia de la Profesa was consecrated as San Felipe Neri after the Jesuits' expulsion in 1767, but the former name remains in use



Tiled frescoes by Juan O'Gorman, Central Library, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

TOP 10 Murals

1 Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso

In 1922, to heal political wounds through art, young artists such as Rivera, Siqueiros, and Orozco, were hired to paint murals on the walls of the school. However, some citizens did not agree with their leftist ideals (see p68).



Mexican muralist David Alfaro Siqueiros in his studio

2 Polyforum Siqueiros

David Alfaro Siqueiros' huge murals cover the exterior and interior walls of this ultra-modern 12-sided cultural center. In the main hall on the fourth floor is his masterpiece, the monumental, multi-dimensional *La Marcha de la Humanidad* or *The March of Humanity* (see p98).

3 Castillo de Chapultepec

On the first floor is the Museo Nacional de Historia which showcases excellent murals featuring aspects of Mexican history by famous muralists. Juan O'Gorman's *Retablo de la Independencia*, José Clemente Orozco's mural of Benito Juárez, and David Alfaro Siqueiros' satiric image of Porfirio Díaz are a few of the best ones (see p43).

4 Casa de los Azulejos

One of José Clemente Orozco's best known murals, the 1925 *Omniciencia*, adorns the staircase of this building, now a Sanborns restaurant. One of his earlier works, it is painted in subdued tones of gold and brown (see p44).

5 Secretaría de Educación Pública

Diego Rivera painted more than 100 murals on three floors of this building between 1923 and 1928. It is the best place in the city to view his murals. See *Day of the Dead* in the second patio on the first floor and his self-portrait in the stairwell leading to the fourth floor. ☎ *República de Argentina* 28 • Map Q2 • 3003-1000 • 9am-6pm Mon-Fri • Free

6 Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

Excellent murals by highly respected muralists decorate the exteriors of several buildings. On the Rectory Tower is David Alfaro Siqueiros' *Alegoría de la Cultura*. The tiled frescos on four façades of the Central Library building by Juan O'Gorman depict 400 years of Mexican history. Francisco Eppens Helguera's mural on the façade of the Medicine building portrays pre-Hispanic themes. On the Olympic Stadium is a high relief mural about family, peace, and sports by Diego Rivera.

☎ *Ciudad Universitaria* • Map B3 • 5622-6470 • 8am-9:30pm daily • Free

7 Palacio Nacional

Covering 4,800 sq ft (450 sq m) three murals, titled *Epic of the Mexican People*, are among Diego Rivera's finest and most visited. This monumental work, spanning the walls of the central staircase of the *palacio*, portrays the history of Mexico. Additional murals fill the walls of the third floor hallway (see pp14–15).



Interiors of the magnificent Palacio de Bellas Artes

8 Palacio de Bellas Artes

Surrounding the interior courtyard of the *palacio* are works of seven muralists. David Alfaro Siqueiros' *Nueva Democracia*, Diego Rivera's *El Hombre Contralor del Universo* and José Clemente Orozco's *Mundo Contemporaneo* are the most outstanding (see pp20–21).

9 Museo Mural Diego Rivera

Diego Rivera's famous *Dream of a Sunday Afternoon in the Alameda Central* was moved here after the earthquake of 1985 destroyed the Hotel Del Prado where Rivera painted the mural in 1947–8. ☎ *Balderas y Colón s/n • Map M2 • 5518-0183 • 10am–6pm Tue–Sun • Adm, free Sun*

10 Museo de Arte Moderno

Excellent oil paintings of many of the best known muralists are showcased here. Works by Rivera, Orozco, Siqueiros, Tamayo, and Juan O'Gorman feature in this museum (see p83).

Top 10 Mural Artists

1 Diego Rivera (1886–1957)

Brilliant muralist and painter, he had Marxist ideals and was a controversial revolutionary.

2 José Clemente Orozco (1883–1949)

Best known for his bold murals portraying themes of human versus mechanical.

3 Juan O'Gorman (1905–82)

Known for his murals and architecture depicting subjects from Mexican history.

4 David Alfaro Siqueiros (1896–1974)

A political activist, he infused his colorful murals with revolutionary ideas.

5 Rufino Tamayo (1899–1991)

Fused Fauvism, Cubism, folk, and pre-Hispanic Mexican styles into his murals and oils.

6 Roberto Montenegro (1887–1968)

One of the first muralists, his works dwell on Mexico's violent past.

7 Manuel Rodríguez Lozano (1896–1971)

Dedicated to establishing a true Mexican artistic style, he later protested the monopoly held by the leading muralists.

8 Francisco Eppens Helguera (1913–90)

Painter, muralist, and sculptor, his huge outdoor murals are made of colored glass tiles.

9 Jean Charlot (1898–1979)

French born, he revived and refined the fresco technique later used by Diego Rivera.

10 González Camarena (1908–81)

He specialized in colorful scenes indigenous to Mexico.





Left **Colorful sombreros** Right **Bright and vibrant flowers for sale**

TOP 10 Markets

1 Mercado Jamaica
Beautiful and vibrantly colorful, this is the city's wholesale flower market. Every imaginable type of seasonal flower grown in the country can be seen here in dazzling abundance. Always excessive, the profusion of blooms of every hue reaches amazing crescendos at major holidays and festivals. ☎ *Av Morelos and Congreso de la Unión • 24 hours, daily*

2 Mercado de la Merced
With crowded narrow paths between small booths offering towering piles of brilliantly colored and artfully displayed merchandise of every kind, a visit to Mexico City's main wholesale and retail market is as much a cultural experience as it is a shopping one. ☎ *Rosario and Abraham Olvera • 6am–6pm daily*

3 Mercado Sonora
Known as the "Witches Market", locals come to this market to buy a broad variety of herbs, herbal remedies, folk medicine, and treatments. Everything required to cast a spell, conjure up love, restore health, or obtain wealth can be found here. ☎ *South of Mercado de la Merced, across Fray Servando Teresa de Mier • 6am–6pm daily*

4 Mercado de Coyoacán
This neighborhood market is friendly and attractive. Many traditional Mexican wares, such as sombreros, brilliant rugs, and

whimsical *piñatas* (papier-mâché figures filled with treats) are sold. The food stalls are a big attraction. On weekends there is a craft market at the Jardín del Centenario (see p47). ☎ *Coyoacán, between Xicoténcatl, Abasolo, Malintzin, and Allende • Map X1 • 10am–6pm daily*



Mercado de Coyoacán

5 Mercado Xochitl
Lively and colorful, this neighborhood market offers meat, poultry, sausage, spices, fruits, and flowers of exceptional quality that are grown along the Xochimilco canals. ☎ *Calles Madero, 16 de Septiembre, Guerrero and Morelos • Map B4 • Daily*

6 Mercado Insurgentes
This indoor market is best known for the glittering displays of fine silver jewelry, pendants, earrings, and bracelets that are artistically displayed and brightly illuminated. There are also silver bowls, platters, tableware, and sculptures. In some booths you can watch silversmiths at work. ☎ *Liverpool and Londres near Florencia • Map J4 • 10am–5pm daily*



7 Mercado San Juan

An artisan's cooperative, the indoor booths of the market fill two floors offering traditional handmade goods such as finely crafted silver jewelry, painted ceramics, and woven textiles.

☎ *Ayuntamiento and Aranda • Map N3*

• 9am–7pm Mon–Sat, 9am–4pm Sun

8 Mercado de Artesanías de la Ciudadela

The largest gathering of souvenir and handicraft vendors in the Centro Histórico area, this semi-open market offers a variety of traditional items. ☎ *Balderas and E. Dondé • Map M3 • 9am–6pm daily*

9 Jardín de Arte

This weekly outdoor art market in the Plaza del Carmen has artists lining the walkways with their works. Of high quality and brilliant hues, the subjects of the paintings range from historical Mexican scenes to contemporary themes. ☎ *San Ángel, Plaza del Carmen bordered by Frontera and Amargura • 9am–7pm Sat*



Paintings on sale, Jardín de Arte

10 Bazar de Sábado

A very popular weekly (only on Saturdays) artisan and handicrafts market, it also has a charming courtyard and an excellent restaurant. Bazar de Sábado technically refers to the skilled craftsmen in the building, however, many of the outdoor booths have excellent wares as well (see p90).

Top 10 Things to Buy

1 Ceramics

Mexico produces a wealth of colorful pottery and ceramics, the Talavera style being the most notable.

2 Woven Fabrics

Look for fine shawls from San Luis Potosí, *panchos* from Saltillo and Zacatecas, and *charro* jackets from Zacatecas and Durango.

3 Cigars

Most upscale hotels and cigar shops sell Cuban and Mexican cigars.

4 Sweets

Sweet breads are offered in dazzling arrays. Fried *churros* (doughnuts), often dipped in hot chocolate, make a great treat.

5 Jewelry

Silver jewelry of the best quality is readily available. A stamp of "925" indicates the highest silver content.

6 Antiques

Furniture, silver jewelry, ceramics, paintings, and art objects are all available in antique shops in Zona Rosa, Polanco, and San Ángel.

7 Leather

Decorative leather jackets, belts, boots, and gloves are popular, as are saddles and bridles.

8 Carvings

A popular folk art, the best woodcarvings come from Oaxaca.

9 Liquor and Wine

Tequila and *mezcal* are internationally renowned Mexican liquors.

10 Other Crafts

Exquisite embroidery work, brightly painted papier-mâché figures, and tin lanterns are also available.



Ask about the artist when buying handicrafts; not everything in the markets is made in Mexico



Left Roadside snacks Center Chicken *tostada* Right *Tamales*

TOP 10 Cuisine

1 Central Mexican Cuisine

With intense colors and spices, Mexican cuisine blends flavors from Aztec, Spanish, African, and European heritage. Corn is the cuisine's foundation and is ground to make flour for *tamales* and *tortillas*. Other staples include beans and chilis.

2 Antojitos

A broad category of small dishes served as appetizers or snacks, a typical *antojito* could be created atop small *tortillas* or pan fried flatbreads and might include layers of spiced bean paste, sautéed herbs or chopped vegetables, cheese, and small bits of meat. It can also include small *tacos*, *tostadas*, or soups.



Chicken *enchiladas* in *mole* sauce

3 Mole

This sauce varies widely in flavor and ingredients, but usually is made with ground chilis, herbs and spices, tomatoes, and almost always a bit of chocolate. The result is a rich and complex sauce that most often accompanies chicken, turkey, or *enchiladas*.

4 Tamales

Tamales are a staple of Mexican life and are made from corn pastry rolled around a simple filling of meat and sauce or chilis. Wrapped in a corn husk for convenience, they are cooked by steaming. Street vendors often prepare them as a morning dish for workers, but restaurants also serve them as a main dish with a spicy red or green sauce.

5 Tortillas, Tacos, Tostadas, and Enchiladas

The foundation of many Mexican dishes, *tortillas* are flat circles of corn dough that are fried and rolled around a filling of meat, sauces, spices, and vegetables. *Tacos* are folded or rolled and eaten by hand. With *tostadas*, the filling is piled on a flat *tortilla* that is fried crispy, and *enchiladas* are rolled and often baked and smothered in a green (*verde*) or red (*rojo*) sauce.

6 Fruits and Cheeses

Central Mexico's year round spring-like climate is perfect for growing a wide range of fruits, and the *mercados* present a dazzling array of fresh fruits including mangoes, papayas, bananas, apples, and pineapples. Cheese, *queso*, is another staple of Mexican cuisine and each region produces its own unique cheeses. Favorites include *oaxaca*, *chihuahua*, creamy *panela*, and smooth, yellow *manchego*.



7 Sopas and Pozole

Most Mexican soups, *sopas*, have a chicken or tomato base. Rich herbs and spices create flavors that are uniquely Mexican. *Tortilla* soup, *albóndigas* (meat-ball) soup, and Mexican lime soup, are favorites. Also popular is *pozole*, a hearty and satisfying stew made from pork and corn.



Mexican soup

8 Carnes y Aves (Meat and Poultry)

Pork is slow-roasted in layers of spices and then shredded or cubed into other dishes. Beef is marinated in delicious combinations of wine, lime juice, and spices to create tender *arrachera* steaks. Chicken, be it braised, grilled, broiled, or boiled is also very popular.

9 Mariscos

Fish is often grilled and served whole with sauces and sides. Shrimps are hugely popular, served on ice with tangy sauces or as fiery *camarones diablo* over rice. Crabs, lobster, and oysters are also popular.

10 Desserts and Sweets

In Mexico City you get the flakiest pastries and the lightest puffy sweet rolls called *pan dulce*. A typical Mexican dessert is the custard-like flan. Also popular are homemade *helados* (ice creams), *sorbetes*, and desserts with rich Mexican chocolate.

Top 10 Drinks

1 Beer

Mexico produces some of the best beers in the world. Favorites include *Corona*, *Dos Equis*, and *Negra Modelo*.

2 Tequila

Mexico's national drink is made by distilling the fermented juices of the blue agave. Fiery and potent, it can sell from \$4 to \$400 a bottle.

3 Pulque

This drink made from fermented cactus juices can be traced back to Aztec times.

4 Horchata

This traditional iced drink, reputed to be a cure for hangovers, is made from almonds, powdered rice, cinnamon, cane sugar, and limes.

5 Wine

Mexico produces over 40 varieties of wines, many of them award-winning.

6 Coffee

Mexican coffee is rich, smooth, and full bodied. A favorite is *café con leche*.

7 Atole

A traditional hot drink made from corn starch, cane sugar, cinnamon, and sometimes chocolate.

8 Hot Chocolate

Traditional Mexican hot chocolate is made from dark chocolate, cane sugar, milk or cream, cinnamon, and ground nuts or eggs for body.

9 Fruit Juice, Licuados

Roadside vendors offer chilled juices, fresh-squeezed from a variety of fresh fruits. When the fruits are blended with milk, honey, and yogurt, you get *licuados*.

10 Aguas Frescas

Fruit juices blended with chilled water or mineral water.



Left **El Rincón del Mariachi, Plaza Garibaldi** Right **Inside a cantina**

TOP 10 Entertainment and Performing Arts

1 Mexican Ballet

The acclaimed Ballet Folklórico de México presents fabulously choreographed folk dances accompanied by lively music within the Art Deco opulence of the theater at the Palacio de Bellas Artes (*see pp20–21*). Classical and modern dance and music performances are also held at the Teatro de la Danza in Polanco (*see sidebar*).

2 Classical Music

The National Symphony Orchestra and the National Opera perform at the Palacio de Bellas Artes. The Centro Cultural Olin Yoliztli and Sala Nezahualcóyotl host music performances. Other musical events are held at venues throughout the city, including the Auditorio Nacional (*see sidebar*) and Estadio Azteca (*see p59*).

3 Lucha Libre

In this enjoyable spectacle, masked combatants skilfully combine wrestling, acrobatics, and pantomime. There are two types of wrestlers – “goodies” or *técnicos* and “baddies” or *rudos* (*see p59*). ☎ *Arena Coliseo: República de Perú 77 • 5526-1687* ☎ *Arena Mexico: Dr. La Vista • 5325-9000*

4 Bars and Lounges

Cantinas start filling up in the late afternoon, usually serve food, and often close by 11pm. Bar la Ópera (*see p73*) in Centro and Cantina la Coyoacana (*see p93*) in Coyoacán are popular

cantinas. Bars and lounges are busiest from midnight on. Many of the large hotels have lounges with nightly entertainment.



A well-stocked bar

5 Dance Clubs

One of the most popular dance clubs is in the lounge at Bar León. Live merengue and salsa music are played. Trendy El Bar Mata offers two floors of dancing to the sounds of jazz, blues, and rock. ☎ *Bar León República de Brasil 5, Col Centro • 9:30pm–3am Thu–Sat • Cover charge* ☎ *El Bar Mata Filomeno Mata 11, Col Centro • 9:30pm–3am Thu–Sat • No cover charge*

6 Dinner Shows

Hotel de Cortés (*see p113*) offers a Friday evening Mexican Fiesta with Folklórico Ballet and a *mariachi* band. Mesón del Cid offers a medieval show with Spanish cuisine each Saturday. Bellini (*see p99*) and a few other restaurants, are part of night-life tours where you dine and then join a bus tour. ☎ *Mesón del Cid: Humboldt 61, Col Centro • 5521-6998*



7 Mariachi Music

The traditional late afternoon and evening place for *mariachi* music is Plaza Garibaldi in Centro Histórico where bands roam, surrounded by bronze statues of the legendary *mariachis*. Another place to enjoy their music is Xochimilco (see pp28–9).



Mariachis, Plaza Garibaldi

8 Cinema

Cinema is extremely popular in Mexico City, and prices are reasonable. Cinemex and Cinépolis are the two largest theater chains. ☎ *Cinemex*: www.cinemex.com ☎ *Cinépolis*: www.cinepolis.com.mx

9 Gay and Lesbian

There is a large and active gay, and to a lesser extent lesbian, community in Mexico City. The bars and discos change frequently, so it is a good idea to check the weekly *Tiempo Libre* (see p102) or the websites below for current information. ☎ www.sergay.com.mx and <http://gayguide.net>

10 Family

The city's ultimate family place is Bosque de Chapultepec (see pp22–3). Favorites include La Feria, Museo del Niño, and Zoológico de Chapultepec. Children will enjoy the boat rides at Xochimilco Floating Gardens (see pp28–9) and views of Mexico City from the top of the Torre Latinoamericana (see p71).

Top 10 Music and Dance Venues

1 Centro Nacional de las Artes

Hosts a variety of shows. ☎ *Av Río Churubusco, Col Tlalpan* • 4155-0000 ext. 1035 • www.cenart.gob.mx

2 Auditorio Nacional

Modern auditorium with excellent acoustics. ☎ *Paseo de la Reforma 50, Col San Miguel Chapultepec* • 9138-1350 • www.auditorio.com.mx

3 Centro Cultural Telmex

Offers Broadway plays in Spanish. ☎ *Av Cuauhtémoc 19, Col Juárez* • 5514-1965

4 Palacio de Bellas Artes

Premier performing and cultural center (see pp20–21).

5 Sala Nezahualcóyotl

Concert hall with 2,400 seats. ☎ *Insurgentes Sur 3000, CU, UNAM* • 5622-7125 • <http://musicaunam.net>

6 Centro Cultural Ollin Yoliztli

Part of an active arts complex. ☎ *Periférico Sur 5141, Col Isidro Fabela* • 5606-3901

7 Teatro de la Danza

Stages a variety of dance and musical shows. ☎ *Centro Cultural del Bosque, Col Polanco* • 5280-8771 extn. 460

8 Teatro Blanquita

Hosts top Mexican artists. ☎ *Av Lázaro Cárdenas 16, Col Centro* • 5325-9000

9 Teatro de los Insurgentes

This fine theater presents a variety of plays and musicals. ☎ *Av Insurgentes Sur 1587, Col San José Insurgentes* • 5611-4253

10 Antiguo Palacio del Arzobispado

Choral performances are held weekly. ☎ *Calle Moneda 4, Col Centro* • 3688-1259



Nightlife tours are offered by many hotels and travel agencies, and often include dinner, a show, and a stop at Plaza Garibaldi



Left Jogger, Viveros de Coyoacán Right Hot-Air Balloon

TOP 10 Outdoor Activities and Sports

1 Hiking

In the mountains, southwest of Mexico City, are several parks, such as Parque Nacional Desierto de los Leones (see p96), Parque Nacional los Dinamos (see p96), and Parque Nacional Ajusco, that offer a variety of hiking trails.

☎ *Parque Nacional Ajusco: Camino Al Ajusco from Periférico Sur*

2 Mountain Biking

There are many mountain-bike trails near Mexico City. Some of the most accessible are at San Nicolás Totolapan. It offers about 93 miles (150 km) of dirt trails at altitudes between 8,900 ft (2,700m) and 12,000 ft (3,740m).

☎ *Picacho-Ajusco Rd • 1675-1627 • Adm • www.parquesannicolas.com.mx • Bikes on rent are available only on weekends*



Biking trail, Parque Nacional de los Leones

3 Rock Climbing

Parque Nacional los Dinamos (see p96) offers the best rock climbing near the city with many bolted and bolt-free climbing routes along the narrow gorge of the Magdalena River. Mochilazo offers guided day trips and rock climbing courses. ☎ *Mochilazo: 5239-5485 • www.mochilazo.com.mx*

4 Jogging and Walking

One of the favorite places to walk and jog is the Bosque de Chapultepec (see pp22-3). Viveros de Coyoacán (see p47), Parque México in Condesa (see p46), and Parque Hundido (see p47) are also popular with joggers and walkers.

5 Bird Watching

One of the best places for bird watching is Xochimilco (see pp28-9), both along the canals and in the Parque Ecologico de Xochimilco. The pine and oak forests at Parque Nacional Desierto de los Leones (see p96) yields different species, including the lovely bright Red Warbler.

6 Hot-Air Balloons and Hang Gliding

A hot-air balloon for a tour over the Valley of Mexico or the pyramids of Teotihuacán can be arranged. For hang gliding and paragliding head to Valle de Bravo (see p63). ☎ *Globo Aventura: 5661-8919 • www.globoaventura.com ☎ Flyvolare: 5331-2460 • www.flyvolare.com.mx ☎ Alas del Hombre: (726) 262-6382 • www.alas.com.mx*

7 Horseback Riding

Many of the National Parks in the Valley of Mexico offer horseback riding on weekends and holidays. Local horse owners offer their horses for rent, and can be found at both Parque Nacional Desierto de los Leones (see p96) and Parque Nacional



Ajusco. In the Valle de Bravo (see p63) there are outfitters with horseback trips to see monarch butterflies in winter.



Parque Nacional de los Leones

8 Water Sports and Boating

Acapulco offers a huge variety of year-round ocean sports and activities including deep sea fishing, boating, scuba diving, and water skiing.

☎ *Acapulco Tourist Office* • (744) 484-4416 • www.visitacapulco.com.mx

9 Golf, Tennis, and Swimming

Most golf courses are members- and guests-only clubs. A golf course that does allow visitors is Campestre Cocoyoc at Hotel Hacienda Cocoyoc. Many hotels offer tennis courts and swimming pools. ☎ *Hotel Hacienda Cocoyoc: Donato Guerra 9, Tizapán, San Ángel* • 5550-2202 • www.cocoyoc.com.mx

10 Volcano Mountaineering
Climbing the volcanoes near Mexico City provides strenuous, but non-technical adventures. Maps and directions for these treks are primitive, but there are guides available. Popular trips include the tough climb to the top of Iztaccihuatl (see p63). Less taxing would be climbs to the top of La Malinche near Puebla or Nevado de Toluca near Valle de Bravo.

☎ *ItalianTREK: 5669-3151* • www.italiantrek.com ☎ *Río y Montaña: 5292-5032* • www.rioymontana.com

Top 10 Spectator Sports

1 Bullfighting
Top matadors fight the toughest bulls. ☎ *Plaza Monumental de Toros México* • 5563-3959 • Sun Nov–Feb

2 Futbol (Soccer)
Mexicans' favorite spectator sport. ☎ *Estadio Azteca: Calzada de Tlalpan 34000* • 5617-8080 ☎ *Estadio Universitario: Av Insurgentes Sur*

3 NBA Basketball
Palacio de los Deportes hosts exhibition games. ☎ *Av Río Churubusco and Calle Añil*

4 Professional Baseball
The home team, Diablos Rojos, plays at Foro Sol. ☎ *Viaducto Río de la Piedad, Col Granjas México* • 5639-8722 • www.diablos.com.mx

5 Horse Racing
Races are held at Hipódromo de las Américas. ☎ *Av Industria Militar, Col Lomas de Sotelo* • 5387-0600 • Fri–Sun • www.hipodromo.com.mx

6 Charrerías
Horsemanship events are held at Lienzo Charro. ☎ *Av Constituyentes 500* • 5277-8706 • www.nacionaldecharros.com

7 Rowing
The Cuernavaca Channel is a popular spot. ☎ 5555-4499

8 Boxing
Boxing bouts are held at Salón 21. ☎ *Molière, 4 Andromaco, Col Ampliación Granada* • 5325-9000

9 Lucha Libre
This entertaining "sport" features costumed wrestlers wearing masks (see p56).

10 Acapulco Cliff Divers
Acapulco's most famous attraction in which young men leap from a 130-ft (40-m) cliff into sea below. ☎ *La Quebrada*



Ticketmaster sells tickets and has information for most of the spectator sports at 5325-9000, www.ticketmaster.com.mx



Band performing at the Festival de México, Centro Histórico

TOP 10 Festivals and Events

1 Día de los Reyes Magos
Three Kings' Day, or Epiphany on January 6, is the traditional gift giving day, when families gather to celebrate. In the days leading up to it, children have their photos taken with the Three Kings, send their gift wish list aloft through balloons, and help select the sweet cakes, *rosca de reyes*, which are served on this day.



Semana Santa procession

2 Semana Santa
The "Holy Week" from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday is one of the most important festivals in Mexico. It combines Catholic tradition with pre-Hispanic festivities. Over a million people gather at Iztapalapa, south of downtown Mexico City, for the annual Passion Play. Good Friday is a day of plays and costumed processions.

3 Holy Saturday
On the Saturday between Good Friday and Easter Sunday, holy vigils and solemn masses are held in many churches. Later, participants gather outside as huge effigies of Judas and other evil forces, are burned signifying the triumph of good over evil.

4 Feria de la Flor más Bella del Ejido

Xochimilco celebrates the arrival of spring, its floriculture, and the ancient Aztec goddess of flowers with a week of festivities in late March or early April. Music in the streets, an abundance of colorful flowers, and family events typify this small-town style festival. One of the highlights is a competition for the most beautifully decorated *trajinera*, or flat boat. ☎ 5676-8879

5 Festival de México
Two weeks of fabulous concerts and special cultural events are held in traditional performing arts venues, historic *palacios*, and in the streets, parks, and plazas of Centro Histórico during March or early April. ☎ <http://festival.org.mx>

6 Día de la Madre
Mother's Day in Mexico is on May 10 and is a joyful occasion. The restaurants are filled with family celebrations. Mothers receive bouquets of roses as presents and are serenaded by *mariachis* (see p57).

7 Defense of Mexico and Fall of Tenochtitlán
Festivities commemorate the valiant defense of Tenochtitlán by the Aztecs, led by Cuauhtémoc, against the Spaniards. Brilliantly costumed *concheros* perform ritual pre-Hispanic dances on August 13 at the Plaza de las Tres Culturas (see p95).

8 Día de los Muertos

The Day of the Dead in Mexico is a two day celebration to honor deceased relatives and ancestors. Families invite the dead to visit by creating elaborate altars decorated with candy skulls, flowers, and the favorite foods of the departed. It is believed that deceased children return on November 1st. The next day the dead adult relatives and ancestors visit.

9 Día de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe

Throughout December pilgrims from across the Americas arrive at Villa de Guadalupe to honor their patron saint and Mexico's beloved Our Lady of Guadalupe. Thousands time their arrival for December 12, the Feast Day of the Virgin of Guadalupe, to attend the mass and thank the Virgin. Pilgrims often complete their journey to the Villa de Guadalupe on their knees.



Feast Day celebrations, Villa de Guadalupe

10 Las Posadas

Christmas processions and plays re-enacting the story of Mary and Joseph seeking lodging and the nativity scene are nightly events throughout the city in the days leading up to Christmas, December 16–24. Candle- and lantern-lit processions fill the streets heading to churches for mass. The Zócalo is decorated with lights and major performance venues hold special events.

Top 10 Public Holidays

1 New Year's Day (Jan 1)

December 31 sees parties all night. Traditionally, colored eggshells filled with confetti are tossed into the air.

2 Constitution Day (Feb 5)

A National Holiday which commemorates the new Constitution of 1917.

3 Natalicio de Benito Juárez (Mar 21)

Mexico's national hero and great reformer President Benito Juárez's (see p39) birthday is a national holiday.

4 Easter Thursday and Good Friday

Holy Thursday (March/April) is a traditional day of worship at churches. Passion Plays are held on Good Friday.

5 Labor Day (May 1)

Parades by workers are held in the streets.

6 Cinco de Mayo (May 5)

Commemorates the 1862 Battle of Puebla, where the Mexican army defeated the invading French.

7 Independence Day (Sep 16)

On the evening before, the President issues the cry of independence and rings the Freedom Bell at the Zócalo. A parade through Centro is held on this day.

8 Día de la Raza (Oct 12)

Celebrates Columbus' discovery of the New World.

9 Revolution Day (Nov 20)

Marks the anniversary of the 1910 Revolution (see p39).

10 Christmas (Dec 25)

Midnight masses are followed by festivities on Christmas.



Left **Pyramid of the Sun, Teotihuacán** Center **Taxco** Right **La Parroquia, San Miguel de Allende****TOP 10 Excursions****1 Teotihuacán**

Once the greatest city in Mesoamerica, the ancient ruins form one of the world's biggest and most impressive archaeological zones. Visitors can climb the third largest pyramid in the world, stroll through ancient palaces, and see fabulous ancient murals (see pp32–3).

**Iglesia de San Francisco Javier, Tepotzotlán****2 Tepotzotlán**

The highlight of this mountain town with its pretty plaza and cobblestone streets is the magnificent Iglesia de San Francisco Javier. Next to the church is the Jesuit college which houses the Museo Nacional del Virreinato displaying colonial and religious art. ☎ 27 miles (44 km) N of Mexico City • 5876-0245 • Bus tour and taxi • 9am–5:45pm Tue–Sun • Adm, free Sun

3 Tula

Tula, the capital of the Toltec nation, rose to power in the 10th century, after the fall of Teotihuacán. The most important ruin here is the

Pyramid of Tlahuizcalpantecuhtli (Pyramid of the Morning Star). Four towering Atlanteans, the famous monumental carved stone warriors, crown the pyramid. Other ruins include the Wall of Serpents, ball courts, and the columns of the Burnt Palace.

☎ 53 miles (85 km) N of Mexico City • (773) 732-1183 • Bus tour • 10am–6pm Tue–Sun • Adm • www.inah.gob.mx

4 Taxco

This picturesque colonial mountain town with steep, narrow cobblestone streets is most famous for its talented silversmiths, historic buildings, and the fabulous Baroque church Iglesia de Santa Prisca. The Spaniards first mined a wealth of silver here and Taxco was established as the center for silversmiths in the 1930s. Today, silver shops surround the town's main plaza. ☎ 106 miles (170 km) SW of Mexico City • (762) 622-0798

5 Cuernavaca

Year-round spring-like weather and a convenient location close to Mexico City has attracted the wealthy and powerful to the lovely colonial town of Cuernavaca for centuries. Cortés built his fortress-like residence, Palacio de Cortés, here in 1522. The town center features a cathedral built in the 1520s and nearby there are two lovely plazas. Palacio de

**Atlante de Tula**

Cortés and Jardín Borda were used by Emperor Maximilian I and his wife Carlota as a retreat. Both are open to the public from Tuesday to Sunday. ☎ 56 miles (90 km) S of Mexico City • (777) 314-3872 • www.morelostravel.com

6 Puebla Puebla is famous for its beautiful colonial buildings decorated with hand-painted Talavera tiles. Founded in 1531, the city is nestled between the mountains Popocatepetl, La Malinche, and Iztaccihuatl. It is also known for its colonial churches, fine museums, and numerous boutiques offering exquisite Mexican handicrafts and pottery. ☎ 81 miles (130 km) E of Mexico City • (222) 246-2044 • www.puebla.gob.mx



Museo de Santa Rosa, Puebla

7 Valle de Bravo Wild and beautiful, this area attracts nature lovers and extreme sports enthusiasts. From December to February the Monarch Butterfly Reserve draws many visitors, who come to witness the amazing sight of millions of the brilliant orange butterflies cloaking the forests. ☎ 91 miles (147 km) W of Mexico City • (1800) 696-9696 • www.valledebravo.com.mx

8 Parque Nacional Iztaccihuatl-Popocatepetl

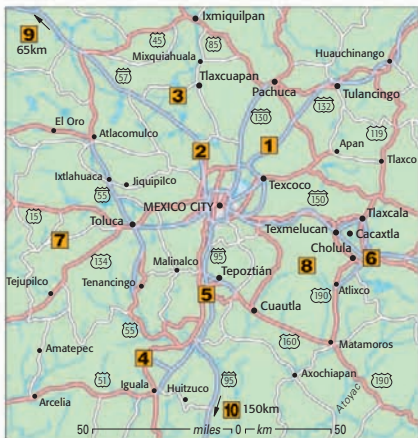
The second and third highest peaks in Mexico are in a pine-forested wilderness area with excellent hiking and mountain biking trails. Paseo de Cortés is another popular place for hiking and mountain biking with excellent views of the volcanoes. ☎ 45 miles (72 km) SE of Mexico City • (597) 978-3829 • 7am-9pm daily • Adm

9 San Miguel de Allende

This charming mountain town is a Mexican National Historic Monument with a lovely city center, a shady plaza surrounded by shops and cafés, and a brilliant Neo-Gothic church, La Parroquia. ☎ 174 miles (280 km) NW of Mexico City • (415) 152-9600 ext. 203

10 Acapulco

With sandy beaches and the warm Pacific Ocean, Acapulco is the perfect place to unwind. The 4-mile (7-km) wide bay offers a selection of beaches for relaxing, family fun, or partying. ☎ 190 miles (300 km) SW of Mexico City • (744) 484-4416 • Airplane or car/bus • www.visitacapulco.com.mx



Valle de Bravo is popular with power boaters, sailors, hikers, mountain bikers, hang gliders, and parasailers





AROUND TOWN

Centro Histórico
66–73

Paseo de la Reforma
and Zona Rosa
74–79

Chapultepec
and Polanco
82–87

Coyoacán and
San Ángel
88–93

Greater Mexico City
94–99

MEXICO CITY'S TOP 10



Left Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso Center Museo Nacional de Arte Right Palacio de Bellas Artes

Centro Histórico

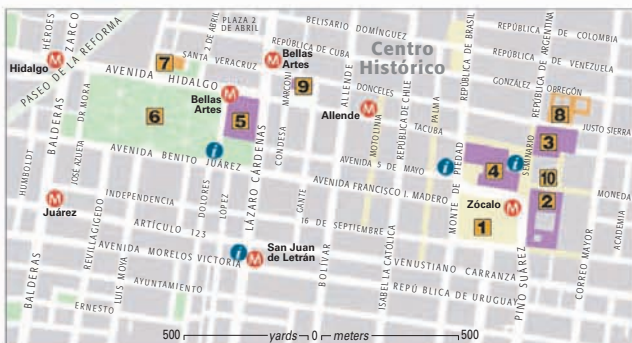
THIS HISTORIC CENTER OF MEXICO CITY, *one of the largest cities in the world, has been a vibrant hub of culture, religion, and politics since the days of the Aztecs. An organized grid of streets extends from the Zócalo, the city's political and social gathering place, leading to incredible churches and palaces, some of which have been turned into fine museums. Other colonial buildings now house boutique hotels, shops, and restaurants. Although it is a busy, noisy, and thriving part of a modern metropolis, you can still find tranquil plazas and quiet old courtyards away from the hustle and bustle.*

TOP 10 Sights

- 1 Zócalo
- 2 Palacio Nacional
- 3 Templo Mayor
- 4 Catedral Metropolitana
- 5 Palacio de Bellas Artes
- 6 Parque Alameda Central
- 7 Museo Franz Mayer
- 8 Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso
- 9 Museo Nacional de Arte
- 10 Museo SHCP in the Palacio del Arzobispado



Catedral Metropolitana, Palacio Nacional, and Zócalo



1 Zócalo

Plaza de la Constitución, also known as Zócalo, was one of the city's main market areas from the days of Tenochtitlán. In the 1860s, Emperor Maximilian I banned merchants and created a Parisian park, with tree-lined walkways and benches. Following the Mexican Revolution the plaza was cleared of all the trees, grass, and ornamentation. The plaza is today the gathering place for social and political causes. 📍 *Monte de Piedad • Map Q3*



Military ceremony at the Zócalo

2 Palacio Nacional

This huge government edifice extends along the length of the Zócalo. Cortés built his palace on the site of the Aztec Emperor Moctezuma II's castle in 1563. The current palace was constructed in 1693 following fires in 1659 and 1692 which destroyed much of the earlier building. Emperor Maximilian I modified the architecture introducing European flair. President Calles added the third floor in 1926. Today, most visitors come to view the brilliant murals of Diego Rivera, especially his *Epic of the Mexican People*, which surrounds the central staircase (see pp14–15).

3 Templo Mayor

This was once the largest and most important temple in the ceremonial complex at the heart of the Aztec empire, until the Spanish destroyed it after their conquest and used the rubble for their own construction. In 1978, city workers digging near the Catedral Metropolitana discovered a carved stone disk, over 10 ft (3 m) in diameter, that enabled archeologists to determine the location of the temple. A major archeological project ensued covering several city blocks. Today, visitors can follow a winding walkway through the excavated ruins and visit the excellent museum which displays many of the artifacts recovered here (see pp16–17).

4 Catedral Metropolitana

The largest cathedral in the Western Hemisphere, it took 240 years to complete. This is reflected in the dazzling array of Baroque and Neo-Classical styles. Built on soft, marshy soil the cathedral was sinking until engineers used a variety of techniques to stabilize it. The cathedral still has a visible tilt, but a huge pendulum hung from the dome marks the slow movement towards the perpendicular. An exceptional collection of paintings, religious furnishings, and glittering altars adorn the interior (see pp12–13).



Altar Mayor, Catedral Metropolitana



A huge Mexican national flag is raised and lowered every day from a towering pole in the Zócalo with much military ceremony

Organ Grinders

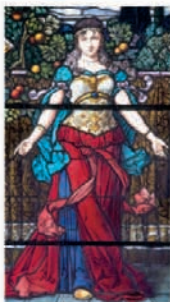
As you walk along a bustling street in Centro you will notice a sound that rises above the various noises of the city. It is the music played by organ grinders hand-cranking old German-made organs. Dressed in beige uniforms they work in teams of two, one turning the crank to produce the music, as the other collects their day's earnings.

5 Palacio de Bellas Artes

Built between 1905 and 1934, this stunning performing arts venue presents a fascinating blend of architectural styles. The dazzling Beaux Arts white Italian marble exterior features ornate domes, columns, and European sculptures and carvings. The interior is a superb Art Deco extravaganza, with red marble columns, black marble floors, classic light fixtures, and brass details. Four stories of Art Deco columns, balconies, and grillwork house a spectacular theater, famous murals, fine gift and book shops, and traveling art exhibitions (*see pp20–21*).

6 Parque Alameda Central

The oldest park in the city was established on the site of an Aztec market by the order of Viceroy Don Luis de Velasco in 1590. It was named after the poplar trees planted there. With shade-giving trees and walking paths, the park provides some tranquil respite from the bustle of the city. Fountains and statues adorn the park, including a bronze figure of Neptune, God of the Sea. ☉ Av Juárez, Angela Peralta, Av Hidalgo and Dr Mora • Map N2



Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso



Museo Franz Mayer

7 Museo Franz Mayer

Fabulous decorative arts from the 16th through 19th century are displayed in this former hospital building built in the 18th century. The features of the old building, the archways, carved wood doors, and frescos, have been incorporated into the design of the display areas which tastefully augment the collection of beautiful everyday decorative objects from Mexico, Europe, and Asia. ☉ Av Hidalgo 45 • Map N2 • 5518-2266 • 10am–5pm Tue–Sun • Adm • www.franzmayer.org.mx

8 Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso

Built as a small Jesuit college in 1588, today the building is perhaps best known as the birthplace of the modern muralist movement.

Diego Rivera painted his first mural, *The Creation*, here in 1922–3. The walls inside have works of early muralists including David Alfaro Siqueiros, José Clemente Orozco, and Fernando Leal. ☉ Justo Sierra 16 • Map Q2 • 5702-6378 • 10am–7:30pm Tue, 10am–5:30pm Wed–Sun • Adm charges for Murals-only, General, and Exposition and Murals tours, free Tue



9 Museo Nacional de Arte
This stunning collection has over 3,000 works by great artists including Miguel Cabrera, José María Velasco, and Diego Rivera. Arranged chronologically, the exhibits focus on the art of New Spain, National Mexican Art, and the new modern art that evolved during and after the Revolution. The Neo-Classical building is fabulous, with a double staircase, ornamental ironwork, and beautiful ceiling paintings by Mariano Coppedé (1839–1920).

📍 *Tacuba 8 • Map P2 • 5130-3400*
• 10:30am–5:30pm Tue–Sun • Adm, free Sun • www.munal.com.mx



Detailed carvings, Museo Nacional de Arte

10 Museo SHCP in the Palacio del Arzobispado
This intriguing museum displays art accepted by the Finance Secretariat in lieu of tax payments. Both famous and little known artists are on display. Juan Correa's *Nacimiento de la Virgen*, Miguel Cabrera's *Don Juan Antonio*, and Diego Rivera's painting of his San Ángel studio are showcased here. Recent tax years' collections are kept in a separate gallery. 📍 *Moneda 4 • Map Q2 • 3688-1243 • 10am–5:30pm Tue–Sun*
• Adm • www.museosdemexico.org



Museo SHCP in the Palacio del Arzobispado

An Alameda Central Stroll

Morning

🕒 Have breakfast in the lovely courtyard of the **Casa de los Azulejos** (see p44), now a **Sanborns Restaurant** (see p73), admiring the fountain, the intricate tile work, and the exquisite mural by Orozco. Across the street is the late Baroque **Iglesia y Ex-Convento de San Francisco** (see p48) and next door is the towering **Torre Latinoamericana** (see p71). Take the elevator to the 44th floor for an exceptional view of the city. Next visit the grand **Palacio de Bellas Artes** (see pp20–21) to explore the fabulous Beaux Arts building with its Art Deco interior. Catch the brilliant murals by Rivera, Siqueiros, Orozco, and Tamayo in the second and third floor porticoes. 🍴 Lunch at the dining room of the *palacio*.

Afternoon

Walk through lovely **Parque Alameda Central** (see p46), to the west of the Palacio de Bellas Artes, and enjoy the park's fountains. Next proceed across Av Hidalgo to the **Museo Franz Mayer** which houses a great collection of decorative arts. Then head east on Av Hidalgo, across Tacuba into the **Palacio Postal** (see p71). The Post Office is famous for its stunning staircase and architecture. Then cross Tacuba and walk on to Plaza Manuel Tolsá to the famous statue **El Caballito** or *The Little Horse* (see p75) by Manuel Tolsá (1757–1816). Spend the rest of the afternoon at **Museo Nacional de Arte** (see pp26–7).





Left Museo Interactivo de Economía Center Museo del Ejército Right Museo de Arte Popular

TOP 10 Small Museums

1 Museo del Ejército
The exhibits of the museum relate the history of the Mexican flag and display military armaments and the armor of the Spanish conquistadors. ☎ *Filomeno Mata 6 • Map P2 • 5512-3215 • 10am–6pm Tue–Sat, 10am–4pm Sun • Free*

2 Museo Interactivo de Economía
Interactive and easy-to-understand exhibits about economics are this museum's attraction. ☎ *Tacuba 17 • Map P2 • 5130-4600 • 9am–6pm Tue–Sun • Adm • www.mide.org.mx*

3 Museo de Arte Popular
Folk art from across Mexico is showcased in this exceptional museum in a lovely Art Deco building. ☎ *Revillagigedo 11 • Map N2 • 5510-2201 • 10am–5pm Tue–Sun, to 8:30pm Thu • Free • www.map.df.gob.mx*

4 Museo Mural Diego Rivera
This museum houses Diego Rivera's famous mural, *Dream of a Sunday Afternoon in the Alameda Central* (see p51).

5 Museo de la Charrería
The Mexican culture and traditions of the *charrería*, or horsemen, are presented in this museum. ☎ *Isabel la Católica 108 • Map P4 • 5709-5032 • 10am–7pm Mon–Fri • Free*

6 Museo José Luis Cuevas
A large collection of works by renowned Mexican artist José Luis Cuevas is displayed here,

along with works of other artists. ☎ *Academia 13 • Map R2 • 5522-0156 • 10am–6pm Tue–Sun • Adm, free Sun • www.museojoseluiscuevas.com.mx*

7 Casa de la Primera Imprenta
This building housed the first printing press in the Americas. A science museum today, it has a model of the press (see p40).

8 Secretaría de Educación Pública
Diego Rivera painted over 100 murals that cover the walls of this building (see p50).

9 Museo de la Caricatura
A fascinating collection of Mexican cartoons are displayed in this museum. ☎ *Donceles 99, Col Centro • Map Q2 • 5704-0459 • 10am–6pm Mon–Fri, 10am–5pm Sat–Sun • Adm*

10 Museo de la Ciudad de México y Estudio de Joaquín Clausell
This is a museum about Mexico City with maps, paintings, and early photographs. Upstairs is the former studio of Mexican painter Joaquín Clausell. ☎ *Pino Suárez 30 • Map Q3 • 5542-0083 • 10am–5:30pm Tue–Sun • Adm, free Wed*





Left Hemicycle at Juárez Right Plaza de Santo Domingo

Top 10 Best of the Rest

1 Iglesia de la Profesa

An early Baroque façade, a Mexican Baroque interior, and a Neo-Classical altarpiece by Manuel Tolsá are highlights of this church (see p49).

2 Casa de los Azulejos

This 18th-century aristocratic residence with an inner courtyard and exquisitely decorated rooms is sheathed in lovely decorative blue tiles (see p44).

3 Hemicycle at Juárez

This striking monument was built in honor of President Benito Juárez in 1910. Guillermo de Heredia designed the open semi-circle. Italian sculptor Lazzaroni created the statue and the supporting sculptures. ☼ Next to Parque Alameda Central on Av Juárez • Map N2

4 Plaza Ciudadela and Mercado de Artesanías de la Ciudadela

The largest handicrafts and souvenir market in the downtown area, it offers a dazzling array of textiles, crafts, and artwork (see p53).

5 Mercado San Juan

Artisans gather in this indoor market, offering traditional and artistic handcrafted wares including fine jewelry, ceramics, and handwoven textiles (see p53).

6 Torre Latinoamericana

Take the elevator to the 44th floor of this slender glass

skyscraper for an astounding view of the city. ☼ Eje Central 2 • Map P2 • 5518-7423 • 9am–10pm daily • Adm • www.torrelatino.com

7 Templo de la Enseñanza

This narrow church with its intricately carved late-Baroque façade has nine grandiose ultra-Baroque altarpieces (see p48).

8 Plaza de Santo Domingo

This plaza, important in the colonial era, is surrounded by austere colonial buildings and the lovely Templo de Santo Domingo on the north (see p48).

9 Laboratorio Arte Alameda

This museum, located in the former convent of San Diego, presents contemporary art through temporary exhibits, screenings, and events. ☼ Dr Mora 7, Col Centro • Map N2 • 5510-2793 • 9am–5pm Tue–Sun • Adm, free Sun • www.artelameda.bellasartes.gob.mx

10 Palacio Postal

Completed in 1907, this stunning *palacio*, the main post office, has an amazing central staircase and an ornate interior. ☼ Tacuba and Eje Central Lázaro Cárdenas • Map P2 • 9am–6pm Mon–Fri, 10am–2pm Sat





Left **Librería Gandhi** Center **Mexican wall-hanging** Right **Arte Mexicano Para el Mundo**

TOP 10 Shopping

1 Arte Mexicano para el Mundo

Reasonably priced, quality Mexican handicrafts are displayed in this pretty colonial building.

☎ *Monte de Piedad 11, Col Centro*
• Map Q3 • 5518-0300 • www.arte-mexicano.com.mx

2 Librería Gandhi

This bookstore offers titles in Spanish, and some in English. They also have a good selection of music CDs. ☎ *Av Juárez 4, Col Centro* • Map N2 • 2625-0606 • www.gandhi.com.mx

3 Dulcería de Celaya

Since 1874 this charming candy store has specialized in traditional Mexican sweets such as crystallized fruits and candied nuts. ☎ *5 de Mayo 39, Col Centro* • Map P2 • 5521-1787

4 Palacio de Bellas Artes Shops

The first floor lobby offers three shops, an excellent bookstore, a music shop, and a small gift shop (see pp20–21).

5 Museo de Arte Popular

The large shop located in the lobby of the Museo de Arte Popular offers bright and colorful Mexican folk art and handicrafts (see p70).

6 Nacional Monte de Piedad

The large showrooms of the National Pawnshop are filled with glittering antique and contempo-

rary jewelry. ☎ *Calle Monte de Piedad 7, Col Centro* • Map Q2 • 5278-1700
• 8:30am–6pm Mon–Fri, 8:30am–1pm Sat
• dns.montepiedad.com.mx

7 La Europea

This chain of liquor stores has one of the best selections of tequilas and wine in the city.

☎ *Ayuntamiento 21, Col Centro* • Map P3
• 5512-6005 • www.laeuropea.com.mx

8 Pastelería Ideal

This bakery is famous for its wedding and birthday cakes, which are often complex and colorful works of art. ☎ *Av 16 de Septiembre 18, Col Centro* • Map P3 • 5130-2970 • www.pasteleriaideal.com.mx

9 Perfumes y Esencias Fraiche

Perfumes and essences are made-to-order, with perfumers hand-blending the scents. ☎ *16 de Septiembre 52, Col Centro* • Map P2 • 01800-337-2424 • www.fraiche.com.mx

10 Catedral Vendors

In front of the Catedral Metropolitana, vendors offer religious relics, prayer cards, and rosaries. Near Templo Mayor, vendors present Mexican crafts (see pp12–13).





Above **Bar la Ópera**

Top 10 Places to Eat

1 La Casa de las Sirenas
Dine on modern Mexican cuisine, such as *cilantro soup* and *mole poblano*. Downstairs, there is a cantina and tequila bar. ☎ *Guatemala 32 • Map Q2 • 5704-3345 • www.lacasadelassirenas.com.mx • \$\$\$*

2 Los Girasoles
This restaurant offers traditional Mexican cuisine including pre-Hispanic dishes. *Salsas*, *tortilla soup*, tamarind *mole*, and duckling in blackberry sauce are popular. ☎ *Tacuba 8 and 10, Plaza Manuel Tolsá • Map P2 • 5510-0630 • www.restaurantelosgirasoles.com • \$\$\$\$*

3 Bar la Ópera
This historic cantina offers a great Mexican menu, along with opulent red booths, polished woodwork, a gleaming long bar, and a bullet hole in the ceiling, courtesy of Pancho Villa. ☎ *Cinco de Mayo 10 • Map P2 • 5512-8959 • \$\$\$*

4 Sanborns in Casa de los Azulejos
Always busy, this favorite meeting spot offers traditional Mexican comfort food, as well as international favorites, in an opulent colonial setting. ☎ *Madero 4 • Map P2 • 5510-9613 • \$\$*

5 Café Tacuba
Excellent traditional Mexican entrées like *Oaxacan tamal* and *enchiladas Tacuba* are on offer at a reasonable price. ☎ *Tacuba 28 • Map P2 • 5518-4950 • www.cafedetacuba.com.mx • \$\$*

Price Categories

For a three course meal for one with half a bottle of wine (or equivalent meal), taxes, and extra charges. **\$** under 150 pesos
\$\$ 150–250 pesos
\$\$\$ 250–350 pesos
\$\$\$\$ 350–450 pesos
\$\$\$\$\$ over 450 pesos

6 Casino Español
Traditional Spanish cuisine where favorites like *paella* and baked goat are served. ☎ *Isabel la Católica 31 • Map P3 • 5521-8894 • 1pm–6pm daily • www.casinoespanol.com.mx*

7 Puro Corazón
Trendy *nouvelle* Mexican cuisine such as *mole poblano* and *arrachera* beef are served here. ☎ *Monte de Piedad 11 • Map Q2 • 5518-0300 • www.artemexicano.com.mx • \$\$\$*

8 Hostería de Santo Domingo
The place serves classic Mexican cuisine such as *chiles en nogada* and *mole poblano*. ☎ *Belisario Domínguez 72 • Map Q2 • 5526-5276 • www.hosteriadesantodomingo.com.mx • \$\$*

9 Taco Inn
This restaurant serves a selection of *tacos* with lots of filling choices as well as many traditional favorites. ☎ *Tacuba 8 and 10, Plaza Manuel Tolsá • Map P2 • \$*

10 Sushi Roll
Japanese cuisine is served with a nice selection of *sashimi* and *sushi* dishes. ☎ *Av 5 de Mayo and Filomeno Mata 15-b • Map P2 • 5521-1217 • www.sushiroll.com.mx • \$\$\$*



Small restaurants may only accept cash; vegetarians might want to ask about cooking oil as animal fat is frequently used



Left Detail, Monumento a la Revolución Center El Caballito Right Monumento a la Independencia

Paseo de la Reforma and Zona Rosa

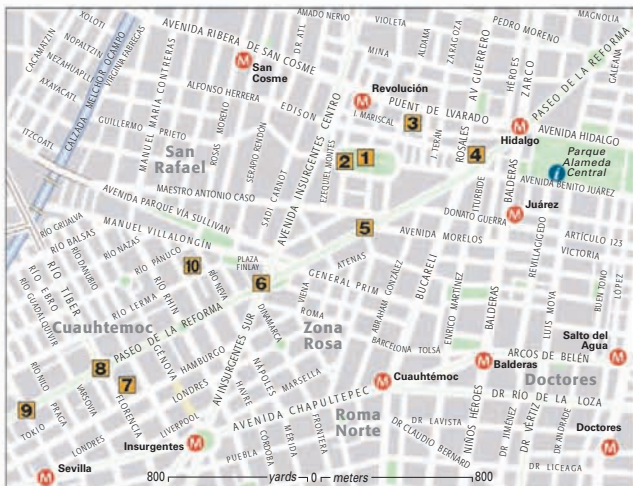
PASEO DE LA REFORMA WAS BUILT in 1865 at the direction of Emperor Maximilian I on the lines of Paris's Champs-Élysées. Today this broad boulevard is one of the city's showpieces, a major thoroughfare with gleaming monuments of marble and gold punctuating the grand traffic circles, the glorietsas. It offers pedestrians a beautiful promenade of shady trees, flower gardens, bronze statues, and park benches. Zona Rosa, an eclectic area of sidewalk cafés, fine restaurants, mid-size hotels, diverse shopping venues, and pulsating nightlife is on the south of the boulevard.

10 Sights

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1 Monumento a la Revolución | 6 Monumento a Cuauhtémoc |
| 2 Museo Nacional de la Revolución | 7 Zona Rosa |
| 3 Museo Nacional de San Carlos | 8 Monumento a la Independencia, El Ángel |
| 4 El Caballito (The Little Horse) | 9 Fuente de la Diana Cazadora |
| 5 Monumento de Colón | 10 Museo Casa de Carranza |



El Ángel



1 Monumento a la Revolución

This massive monument to the Revolution dominates the Plaza of the Republic. Construction of the building began during President Porfirio Díaz's reign, and was to have housed the legislature. Following the bloody revolt, the unfinished shell was repurposed to memorialize the Revolution and serve as a mausoleum for the remains of some of the uprising's heroes, including Pancho Villa, Venustiano Carranza, Francisco I. Madero, Plutarco Elías Calles, and Lázaro Cárdenas. 📍 *Plaza de la República, Col Cuauhtémoc • Map L2*



Museo Nacional de la Revolución

2 Museo Nacional de la Revolución

This excellent museum in the basement of the Monumento a la Revolución portrays Mexican history from 1867 to the Revolutionary constitution of 1917. The exhibits focus on the people and events of this period, telling the story through the use of photographs, newspaper headlines announcing the Revolution, historic documents, furnishings, displays of the personal belongings of key figures, guns and rifles used in battle of 1914, and a reward poster for Pancho Villa dated March 9, 1916. 📍 *Plaza de la República, Col Tabacalera • Map L2*
• 5546-2115 • 9am–5pm Tue–Sun
• Adm free Sun • www.cultura.df.gob.mx



Rear façade, Museo Nacional de San Carlos

3 Museo Nacional de San Carlos

This impressive Neo-Classical building designed by Manuel Tolsá houses a most impressive collection of European art. It displays paintings from the 15th to the early 20th century and includes notable oils from the Flemish, French, Italian, and Spanish schools. Highlights include oils by Rubens, sketches by Goya, and sculptures by Rodin. 📍 *Av Puente de Alvarado 50, Col Tabacalera • Map M2 • 5566-8085*
• 10am–6pm Wed–Mon • Adm, free Sun
• www.mnsancarlos.com

4 El Caballito (The Little Horse)

This monumental bright yellow metallic sculpture by renowned Mexican artist Sebastián was dedicated in 1992. Considered one of his finest works, the statue makes a dramatic statement and dominates the plaza it stands in with the skyscraper known as the Torre del Caballito behind it. The modern statue represents the head of a horse and replaced a classical sculpture by Manuel Tolsá of Charles IV on horseback. It had stood there for 127 years, until 1979 when the street was altered. Both sculptures are known as *El Caballito*. 📍 *Paseo de la Reforma and Rosales • Map M2*



Manuel Tolsá's *El Caballito* (the original "Little Horse") now stands across the street from the Palacio de Minería

Walk of the Reform

Emperor Maximilian I named the road “Causeway of the Empress” for his wife. After the Republic was restored, it was renamed Paseo de la Reforma (Walk of the Reform).

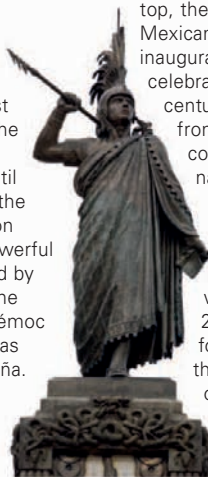
The road was transformed, and under Porfirio Díaz the major monuments were placed in the *glorietas* (traffic circles), and 36 statues of national heroes were placed along the road.

5 Monumento de Colón

Explorer Christopher Columbus is commemorated in this monument inaugurated in 1877. Created in France by artist Carlos Cordier, the statue was donated to the city by Don Antonio Escandón. Seated on the red limestone pedestal below Colón (Columbus) are four bronze statues of Friar Diego de Deza who supported his project, Friar Juan Pérez de Marchena, Friar Bartolomé de las Casas, defender of the native cause, and Friar Pedro de Gante. 📍 *Paseo de la Reforma glorietta at Av Morelos and I. Ramírez • Map L3*

6 Monumento a Cuauhtémoc

Cuauhtémoc was the last Aztec emperor and led the defense of Tenochtitlán against the Spaniards until he was captured during the final battle at Tlatelolco on August 13, 1521. This powerful monument was designed by Francisco Jiménez and the bronze statue of Cuauhtémoc holding his spear aloft was sculpted by Miguel Noreña. The bas-reliefs on the base depict the torture of Cuauhtémoc by the Spanish. 📍 *Paseo de la Reforma glorietta at Insurgentes Sur • Map K3*



Monumento a Cuauhtémoc

7 Zona Rosa

Once a trendy neighborhood of first-class hotels and restaurants, sidewalk cafés, and boutiques, Zona Rosa’s elegant past has been overrun by the tawdry nightlife now found here. Visitors should exercise caution if they are going out in the evening. 📍 *Paseo de la Reforma, Niza, Av Chapultepec and Varsovia • Map K4*



Zona Rosa

8 Monumento a la Independencia, El Ángel

Widely referred to as El Ángel for the Winged Victory at the top, the glorious monument to Mexican Independence was inaugurated in 1910 to celebrate Mexico’s first century of independence from Spain. The steel column covered with the names of heroes is 118 ft (36 m) high. The Winged Victory, by artist Enrique Alciati, is of bronze covered with gold and stands 22 ft (6.7 m) high. The four bronze statues at the corners of the base of the column symbolize Law, Justice, War, and Peace.

📍 *Paseo de la Reforma, glorietta at Florencia • Map J4*



Fuente de la Diana Cazadora

9 Fuente de la Diana Cazadora

A magnificent statue of Roman goddess Diana the Huntress adorns the fountain in the westernmost *glorieta* on the Paseo de la Reforma.

Sculpted by

John Olaguíbel, the bronze statue weighs over a ton. The voluptuous nude Diana created much debate and controversy in 1942, and finally the artist covered her loins with a bronze covering, which remained in place until 1967. The stone fountain was designed by architect Vicente Mendiola.

📍 Paseo de la Reforma *glorieta* at Río Rhin • Map G3

10 Museo Casa de Carranza

Venustiano Carranza was a Mexican Revolutionary leader and President of the Republic from 1917–20. He was later executed in Puebla on May 7, 1920. He lived in this 1908 building, inspired by French architecture, for the last six months of his life. Memorabilia from Carranza's life, furnishings, art, and a library of the Constitution of 1917 fill 13 exhibition rooms. The museum has an extensive photographic collection which covers the tumultuous period of the Mexican Revolution. It includes photos of the legislative council that approved Mexico's present constitution on February 5, 1917.

📍 Río Lerma 35, Col Cuauhtémoc • Map K3 • 5546-6494 • 9am–6pm Tue–Sat, 10am–5pm Sun • Adm • www.cnca.gob.mx/cnca/inah/museos/sitio/dfsit.html

Paseo de la Reforma by Foot and Turibus

Morning

🕒 Begin from **El Caballito** (see p75), at the corner of Av Juárez and board the **Turibus** (see p104) to the **Monumento a la Revolución** (see p75) north of the Reforma. Hop off at stop #13 to visit **Museo Nacional de la Revolución** (see p75) and also the **Museo Nacional San Carlos** (see p75). Back on the bus, take a top deck seat to view the skyline and the **Monumento de Colón** and **Monumento a Cuauhtémoc** at the *glorietas*. A majestic palm tree occupies the next *glorieta*. To the north is the **Bolsa Mexicana de Valores** (see p45) with its glass dome between two high-rise glass buildings. Get off at stop #15 for **Monumento a la Independencia**. Walk south across Reforma into the shopping and café district of Zona Rosa. On the right is **Mercado Insurgentes** (see p52) and on the left is **Plaza del Ángel** (see p78). Just ahead is a great café, **Konditori** (see p79), where you can stop for lunch.

Afternoon

🕒 Return to the Turibus stop #15. Take a seat upstairs and watch for the Roman goddess Diana, the huntress, in the final *glorieta* standing atop **Fuente de la Diana Cazadora**. Step off the bus at stop #16 and head to the 52nd floor of **Torre Mayor** (see p45) for an incredible view of Mexico City. Downstairs, the Torre Mayor also has trendy shops, boutiques, and cafés. Stop for a cup of *café con leche*, a special Mexican coffee.





Left **Antique shop, Plaza del Ángel** Right **Via Spiga**

TOP 10 Shopping

1 **Fonart**

One of the best stores to shop for Mexican handicrafts – everything from ceramics to woven baskets are available here. ☎ *Av Paseo de la Reforma No. 333, Col Juárez • Map L3 • 5093-6000 • www.fonart.com.mx*

2 **Plaza del Ángel**

This attractive plaza houses some 30 antique shops selling an amazing selection of fine antiques, including porcelain, oil paintings, furniture, and silver. ☎ *Londres 161, Col Juárez • Map H3*

3 **Mercado Insurgentes**

One of the best, and most fun places to shop for silver jewelry, sculpture, and tableware is at this Zona Rosa marketplace. With some 200 booths, the selection of jewelry is outstanding (see p52).

4 **Via Spiga**

The latest handcrafted Italian leather boots, shoes, purses, and bags of excellent quality are available here. ☎ *Hamburgo 136, Col Juárez • Map H3 • 5207-9224*

5 **Hevart's Galería de Arte**

This gallery sells colorful, classically inspired, Mexican-styled oil paintings of landscapes and still-lives of fruits and flowers. Fine marble or bronze sculptures of family scenes are also available. ☎ *Entrance from Ambers, NH Mexico City, Col Juárez • Map H3 • 5228-9928 extn. 1666*

6 **Galería Arvil**

This gallery specializes in contemporary Mexican art. ☎ *Cerrada de Hamburgo 7, Col Juárez • Map H3 • 5207-2900 • www.arvil.com.mx*

7 **Galería Enrique Jiménez Maren**

The gallery houses an eclectic selection of modern and contemporary Mexican art, including sculptures and paintings. ☎ *Paseo de la Reforma 234, Col Juárez • Map K3 • 1997-9492 • www.galeria-maren.com.mx*

8 **Plaza la Rosa**

This lively shopping center in the center of Zona Rosa offers dozens of name-brand clothing stores. ☎ *Between Ambers and Génova, Col Juárez • Map H3*

9 **Sanborns**

This department store offers a restaurant, ATM, pharmacy, gift items, and a books, periodicals, and CD section. ☎ *Hotel Calinda Geneve, Paseo de la Reforma 45 • Map H3 • 5705-5722 • www.sanborns.com.mx*

10 **Talleres de los Ballesteros**

Excellent Mexican silver goods are sold here. ☎ *Ambers 24-3, Col Juárez • Map K4 • 5511-8281*





Above **Italianni's**

Top 10 Places to Eat

1 Gaudí
Fine Spanish cuisine is served in this elegant dining room. Entrées include red snapper in cider, and medallions of steak in sherry. In the lobby the pleasant café serves breakfast, light meals, and a Mexican buffet. 📍 *Imperial Hotel, Paseo de la Reforma 64 • Map L3 • \$\$\$*

2 Manhattan Deli
This attractive restaurant serves New York-style deli meals in an upscale but relaxed atmosphere. 📍 *Hotel María Isabel Sheraton • Map J4 • 5242-5555 extn. 3701 • \$\$\$*

3 Tezka
Creative Basque-influenced cuisine blends sweet and savory flavors throughout the menu of this place. The extensive wine list complements the entrées. 📍 *Hotel Royal, Zona Rosa • Map H3 • 5228-9918 • Closed Sunday • \$\$\$\$\$*

4 Italianni's
This bright and cheerful family restaurant serves pasta, pizzas, and wine. 📍 *Plaza la Rosa, Col Juárez • Map H3 • 5207-4505 • www.italiannis.com • \$\$*

5 Fonda el Refugio
Authentic cuisine from the major regions of Mexico is served in this charming restaurant. The varied menu features daily specials, including *mole poblano* and *albóndigas en chile chipotle*. 📍 *Liverpool 166, Col Juárez • Map H3 • 5525-8128 • \$\$*

Price Categories

For a three course meal for one with half a bottle of wine (or equivalent meal), taxes, and extra charges.	\$ under 150 pesos
	\$\$ 150–250 pesos
	\$\$\$ 250–350 pesos
	\$\$\$\$ 350–450 pesos
	\$\$\$\$\$ over 450 pesos

6 Café Milano
Richly flavored Italian cuisine and international favorites are on the menu in this café at the Hotel Marco Polo (see p114).

7 Konditori
This café is famous for its flaky Danish pastries and Scandinavian cuisine. Sandwiches and other entrées are also available here. 📍 *Génova 61, Col Juárez • Map K4 • 5511-0722 • www.konditori.com.mx • \$\$\$*

8 Les Moustaches
Excellent French cuisine and wine are served here. 📍 *Río Sena 88, Col Cuauhtémoc • Map H2 • 5525-1265 • www.lesmoustaches.com.mx • \$\$\$\$\$*

9 Cielo Rojo
Savor the excellent traditional Mexican cuisine served here with tequila, margaritas, *mezcal*, or *pulque*. 📍 *Génova 70, Col Juárez • Map K4 • 5525-1196 • \$\$\$*

10 Café el Péndulo
Large platters of *huevos péndulo*, omelets, soups, and salads are served here. 📍 *Hamburgo 126, Col Juárez • Map H3 • 5208-2327 • www.pendolo.com • \$\$*









Left Bosque de Chapultepec Center Museo Rufino Tamayo Right Performers from Veracruz

Chapultepec and Polanco

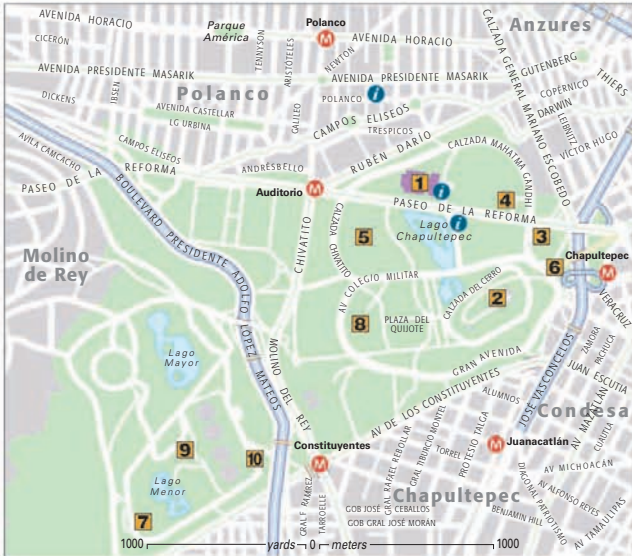
FOR CENTURIES AN EXCLUSIVE RETREAT *for the leaders of ancient Mexico, Bosque de Chapultepec was turned into a public park by President Lázaro Cárdenas in the 1930s. Today, it seems, almost everyone in the city heads to the park on weekends to enjoy the lakes, woods, zoo, and museums. Vendors lining the pathways contribute to the festive air. Just north of the park, Polanco is home to many of the city's wealthiest residents. It also has high-end stores, fine restaurants, pleasant cafés, and boutique shops.*

TOP 10 Sights

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 Museo Nacional de Antropología | 6 Monumento a los Niños Héroes |
| 2 Castillo de Chapultepec | 7 Museo de Historia Natural |
| 3 Museo de Arte Moderno | 8 Bosque de Chapultepec |
| 4 Museo Rufino Tamayo | 9 Fuente de Tláloc |
| 5 Zoológico de Chapultepec | 10 Papalote Museo del Niño |



Lago Mayor, Bosque de Chapultepec





1 Museo Nacional de Antropología

This internationally renowned anthropology museum showcases, in a series of halls, original artifacts from pre-Hispanic Mexico discovered at archeological sites throughout the country. The magnificent 180-ton monolith of Tláloc, God of Rain, stands near the entrance. Inside, an impressive central courtyard is dominated by a modern, 36-ft (11-m), intricately decorated pillar. It symbolically represents the pre-Hispanic past and the scientific and technological future. It alone supports a 275-ft (84-m) long concrete canopy (see pp8–9).



Chacmool, Museo Nacional de Antropología

2 Castillo de Chapultepec

Located atop the highest point in Bosque de Chapultepec, the enormous castle with its fortress-like walls dominates the Mexico City skyline. The personal residence of Emperor Maximilian I, President Porfirio Díaz, and other Mexican presidents until 1939, the castle is now the headquarters of the National History Museum with two sections – the Alcázar and the Castillo (see p43).

☎ Section 1, Bosque de Chapultepec • Map E4 • 5061-9214 • 9am–4:30pm Tue–Sun • Adm, free Sun • www.castillodechapultepec.inah.gob.mx



Castillo de Chapultepec

3 Museo de Arte Moderno

Excellent modern paintings, sculpture, and photography from some of the best known 20th-century Mexican artists are part of the permanent collection housed in this Pedro Ramírez Vázquez-designed building. Frida Kahlo's huge painting, *Las Dos Fridas* (*The Two Fridas*), is on display here. Oil paintings by the great muralists are well

represented, as are works by José Luis Cuevas (b. 1934) and Manuel Felguérez (b. 1928).

☎ Paseo de la Reforma and Gandhi, Bosque de Chapultepec • Map F3 • 5211-8331 • 10am–5:30pm Tue–Sun • Adm free Sun • www.conaculta.gob.mx/mam



Museo de Arte Moderno

4 Museo Rufino Tamayo

This magnificent collection by internationally recognized modern artists was accumulated by renowned Mexican artist Rufino Tamayo. Tamayo and his wife Olga donated the museum and their collection in 1981. More than 160 artists, international as well as Mexican, are represented including Salvador Dalí, Max Ernst, William de Kooning, Andy Warhol, Francisco Toledo, José Luis Cuevas, Sebastián, and of course Rufino Tamayo. Selected works from the permanent collection are exhibited, alongside temporary visiting exhibitions.

☎ Paseo de la Reforma and Gandhi, Bosque de Chapultepec • Map E3 • 5286-6519 • 10am–6pm Tue–Sun • Adm, free Sun • www.museotamayo.org



Voladores de Papantla

The flying men from Veracruz present their traditional ritual near the entrance to the Museo Nacional de Antropología. Five men climb to the top of a 75-ft (23-m) pole. As one plays music and dances, the other four take turns to gracefully slide off the platform with a rope tied to one leg, gradually swirling upside down until each reaches the ground.

5 Zoológico de Chapultepec

Famous for its giant pandas, the zoo is home to more than 250 different species.

Here, popular animals such as tigers and elephants live alongside rare native animals, such as the Mexican hairless dog.

📍 Section 1, Bosque de Chapultepec • Map D3 • 5553-6263 • 9am–4:30pm Tue–Sun
• Free • www.chapultepec.df.gob.mx



Elephant, Zoológico de Chapultepec

6 Monumento a los Niños Héroes

This striking marble monument at the main entrance to Bosque de Chapultepec honors the six young cadets who fought valiantly during the US invasion of 1847, defying orders to retreat. The last cadet standing, wrapped the Mexican flag around himself and jumped off the battlements. 📍 Section 2, Bosque de Chapultepec • Map B6



Monumento a los Niños Héroes



Museo de Historia Natural

7 Museo de Historia Natural

The displays of this museum are ideal for children to learn about the natural world. A small planetarium offers exhibits on the creation of the universe, the solar system, and earth. A dinosaur skeleton dominates the

center of the Evolution of Life Hall. Three stuffed polar bears are the highlights of the Life on Earth Hall.

There is also a section on the Natural History of Mexico. 📍 Section 2, Bosque de Chapultepec • Map B6 • 5515-6304

• 10am–5pm Tue–Sun • Adm, free Tue
• www.sma.df.gob.mx/mhn

8 Bosque de Chapultepec

One of the largest, prettiest, and most visited urban parks in the world, Bosque de Chapultepec is loved by Mexicans and visitors alike. Many visitors discover the park while visiting the Museo Nacional de Antropología or the spectacular hilltop Castillo de Chapultepec which houses the Museo Nacional de Historia. The park offers miles of paved walkways that lead through woods, past lakes, into lovely gardens, and connect to many more significant museums and attractions. There are lakeside restaurants, picnic spots with tall, shady trees, shops, and places to rent paddleboats (see pp22–3).

Zoológico de Chapultepec also has an extensive collection of birds, including a large walk-through aviary of Mexican species

9 Fuente de Tláloc This whimsical multi-hued horizontal mosaic sculpture of a running Tláloc, the Aztec God of Rain, was designed by Diego Rivera in 1952. A favorite with children, the fountain spreads in front of a small building called El Cárcamo that was once part of the city's water system. Inside, Diego Rivera painted huge murals with beautiful flowing designs venerating water and the workers who built the system that brings water into Mexico City. 📍 *Section 2, Bosque de Chapultepec • Map C5*



Papalote Museo del Niño

10 Papalote Museo del Niño “Not touching is forbidden” is the motto at this fascinating children’s museum. All of the 250 activities are interactive and focus on art, science, and technology. A creative complex of three brightly colored cubic, spherical, and triangular shaped buildings, designed by architect Ricardo Legorreta, houses the museum. The building also has an IMAX theater. The museum adds new exhibits frequently, often collaborating with corporate donors to include state-of-the-art equipment and activities. Two of the most popular exhibits are the flight simulator and the interactive traditional crafts area. 📍 *Section 2, Bosque de Chapultepec • Map C6*
• 5237-1710 • 9am–6pm daily • Adm
• www.papalote.org.mx

Museum Highlights Walk

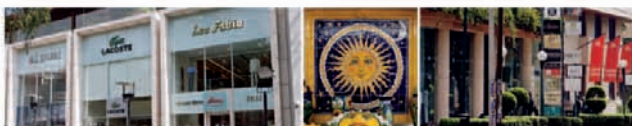
Morning

🕒 To the right of the entrance to **Bosque de Chapultepec** is the **Museo de Arte Moderno**. Turn left on the road that leads up to the **Castillo de Chapultepec** (see p43). When you reach the **Casa de los Espejos** (see p25) take a tram to the top of the hill. The road curves past the **Museo del Caracol** (see p24), which highlights major moments in Mexican history. At the top of the hill enter the Castillo and go straight to the **Alcázar Section** of the **Museo Nacional de Historia** (see p43). Explore the opulent rooms of the former **President’s Mansion**, walk up the **Staircase of the Lions**, and visit the **Garden of the Keep** (see p25). Head back to the museum’s **Castillo Section** (see p43) and look at the murals in the main staircase and the first floor before visiting the gift shop.

Afternoon

🕒 Descend the hill and follow a sidewalk lined with many vendors – you may want to buy a cold bottled drink – to **Lago de Chapultepec** (see p23). Turn right toward the **Museo Nacional de Antropología** (see pp8–9) and follow the signs. After you enter the museum go into the courtyard and turn left down the stairs for lunch in the excellent café. Spend the rest of the day exploring the fabulous halls of this renowned anthropological museum. Be sure to see the **Mexica Hall** (see pp10–11) at the end of the courtyard, and the **Teotihuacán Hall**.





Left **Fashion stores, Avenida Presidente Masarik** Center **Talavera ceramics** Right **Shops, Polanco**

TOP 10 Shops and Galleries

1 Galería Enrique Guerrero

This gallery presents the works of masters such as José Clemente Orozco. Contemporary artists are also promoted.

☎ Horacio 1549 • 5280-2941

• www.galeriaenriqueguerrero.com

2 Galería Lopez Quiroga

The gallery offers a great selection of paintings, drawings, sculpture, ceramics, and jewelry.

☎ Aristóteles 169, Col Polanco • Map C1

• 5280-1710 • www.lopezquiroga.com

3 Ginocchio Galería

Specializing in modern and contemporary works, this gallery displays a range of Mexican and international art.

☎ Arquímedes 175, Col Polanco • Map

D1 • 5254-8813 • www.ginocchiogaleria.com

4 Galería Juan Martín

The gallery promotes contemporary Mexican art. It has prints by Manuel Bravo, acrylics by Roger Von Gunten, and ceramics by Francisco Toledo. ☎ Dickens 33B, Col Polanco • 5280-0277 • www.artemexico.com/juanmartin

5 Galería Oscar Román

The gallery presents works of famous and emerging contemporary Mexican artists. ☎ Julio Verne 14, Col Polanco • 5280-0436

• www.galeriaoscarroman.com.mx

6 Uriarte Talavera

A good place to shop for Talavera ceramics from Puebla,

hand-painted with the traditional bright blue and yellow colors.

☎ Alejandro Dumas 77, Col Polanco

• www.uriartetlalavera.com.mx

7 Frattina

This boutique offers the very best Mexican and international designer collections and accessories for women. ☎ Av Presidente Masarik 420, Col Polanco • 5281-4028

• www.frattina.com.mx

8 Tane

Exceptional Mexican silver designs are on sale in this boutique shop. ☎ Av Presidente Masarik 430, Col Polanco • 5282-6200 • www.tane.com.mx

9 Pasaje Polanco

Boutique shops surround a lovely courtyard just south of Av Presidente Masarik, selling everything from shawls to toys.

☎ Polanco, off Oscar Wilde

10 Avenida Presidente Masarik

This avenue is lined with the best-known fashion and accessory stores including Cartier, DKNY, and Tiffany. ☎ Av Presidente Masarik, Col Polanco • Map C2





Left **Ristorante Capri** Right **Meridiem**, with a view of the beautiful Lago Mayor

Price Categories

For a three course meal for one with half a bottle of wine (or equivalent meal), taxes, and extra charges.	\$	under 150 pesos
	\$\$	150–250 pesos
	\$\$\$	250–350 pesos
	\$\$\$\$	350–450 pesos
	\$\$\$\$\$	over 450 pesos

Top 10 Places to Eat

1 Hacienda de los Morales

Elegant international and Mexican dining in a charming, 16th-century colonial hacienda. ☎ *Vázquez de Mella 525 Col Del Bosque* • 5283-3054 • Coat and tie for dinner, reservations required • www.haciendadelosmorales.com • \$\$\$\$

2 Giandolce

This café serves *huevos marinara* (eggs with sauce), *focaccia* bread sandwiches, and ice creams. ☎ *Av Presidente Masarik 270, Col Polanco Map D2* • 5282-1234 • www.giandolce.com • \$\$

3 Snob Café

This pretty courtyard café offers gourmet coffees and desserts, with breakfast and lunch selections. ☎ *Oscar Wilde 31, Pasaje Polanco, Col Polanco* • 5281-0816 • www.snob.com.mx • \$

4 Café Lutece

This combination gourmet shop and café specializes in fine wines and cheeses. ☎ *Emilio Castelar 95, Col Polanco* • 5280-9222 • No vegetarian • \$\$\$

5 Ristorante Capri

This cozy Italian restaurant has a wine bar and wood-fired pizza. ☎ *Julio Verne 83, Col Polanco* • 5280-2908 • \$\$\$

6 Au Pied de Cochon

Sublime French cuisine is served 24 hours daily at this fashionable bistro in the Presidente InterContinental Hotel. Sea-

food and classic onion soup are the specialties here (see p112).

☎ *Reservations recommended* • \$\$\$\$

7 Thai Gardens

Authentic, exotic Thai cuisine is served in this elegant restaurant. ☎ *Calderón de al Barca 72, Col Polanco* • 5281-3850 • www.thaigardensgroup.com • \$\$\$\$

8 Izote

Renowned cookbook author Patricia Quintana prepares creative Mexican cuisine with traditional pre-Hispanic ingredients. ☎ *Av Presidente Masarik 513, Col Polanco* • 5280-1671 • Reservations recommended • \$\$\$\$

9 Rincón Argentino

Large platters of excellent beef are grilled to order. The decor is casual Argentina ranch. ☎ *Av Presidente Masarik 177, Col Polanco* • 5254-8744 • www.rinconargentino.com.mx • \$\$\$\$

10 Meridiem

The restaurant's extensive menu provides great choice. ☎ *Lago Mayor, Section 2, Bosque de Chapultepec* • 5273-3599 • www.meridiem.com.mx • \$\$\$\$



Small restaurants may only accept cash; vegetarians might want to ask about cooking oil as animal fat is frequently used



Left El Bazar de Sábado Restaurant Right Museo del Carmen

Coyoacán and San Ángel

ONCE SMALL COLONIAL TOWNS, both Coyoacán and San Ángel have retained their charm although they are engulfed by the ever-expanding Mexico City. Both are tranquil oases that offer glimpses of traditional Mexican life, with green park-like plazas, cobblestone streets, flower gardens, and old colonial mansions. In 1519, Cortés made Coyoacán his base during the siege of Tenochtitlán. Dominican and Carmelite friars moved into San Ángel after the Spanish conquest. In the 20th century the area's quiet beauty attracted artists and celebrities including Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo, and political

refugee León Trotsky. Visitors flock here to visit the former homes and studios of these famous people and savor the towns' artistic environment. They shop for paintings and crafts, enjoy the sidewalk cafés, boutique shops, and museums.

10 Sights

- 1 Museo Frida Kahlo
- 2 Plaza Hidalgo
- 3 Museo Nacional de las Intervenciones
- 4 Museo León Trotsky
- 5 Bazar de Sábado
- 6 Ex-Convento e Iglesia del Carmen
- 7 Museo Casa Estudio Diego Rivera y Frida Kahlo
- 8 Museo Nacional de la Acuarela
- 9 Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil
- 10 Museo Soumaya



Jardín del Centenario, Plaza Hidalgo





Museo Frida Kahlo

1 Museo Frida Kahlo
This vibrant blue house is where Frida Kahlo was born and spent most of her life creating her greatest works. A self-taught painter, she developed a unique style here that blended realist and surrealist elements. The house is filled with personal belongings, paintings, and the favorite artworks of Frida and her husband, Diego Rivera. Frida's studio has her easel and paintbrushes, the bedroom displays her signature Mexican regional clothing and jewelry, and the cheery kitchen is filled with Mexican pottery. ☎ *Londres 247, Col Coyoacán • Map X1 • 5554-5999 • 10am–5:45pm Tue–Sun • Adm • www.museofridakahlo.org*

2 Plaza Hidalgo
At one end of this bustling plaza stands the Iglesia de San Juan Bautista. The church's elegant interior features a 17th-century Baroque altarpiece. Across the plaza is the 18th-century municipal building. Murals depicting local history are in the attached chapel. Across the Calles Carrillo Puerto is Jardín del Centenario (see p47). Here stands the famous Fountain of Coyoacán. ☎ *Calles Carrillo Puerto, Caballocalco and B. Domínguez • Map X2*

3 Museo Nacional de las Intervenciones

Museo Nacional de las Intervenciones is located within the complex of El Antiguo Convento Churubusco. It chronicles the invasions of Mexico following its independence from Spain. Highlighted here is the Spanish invasion of 1829, the French invasion of 1838–9, the US invasion of 1846–7, the French invasion of 1862–7 as well as incursions by the USA in 1914 and 1916. There are displays of documents, military artifacts, uniforms, and stories of the heroes and villains.

☎ *Calle 20 de Agosto s/n, Col San Diego Churubusco • 5604-0699 • 9am–6pm Tue–Sun • Adm • www.inah.gob.mx*

4 Museo León Trotsky

Often referred to as the “Little Fortress”, this was the home of Russian revolutionary León Trotsky from 1939 until his assassination here on August 20, 1940. The house remains the way it was on the day he was murdered. The desk in his study is covered with his papers, pens, a calendar, and a magnifying glass. Also seen are his books and typewriter. Bullet holes from an earlier attempt on his life riddle the walls, and worn Mexican rugs lie on the floors. His ashes are interred in the peaceful courtyard. ☎ *Av Río Churubusco 410 • Map X1 • 5554-0687 • 10am–5pm Tue–Sun • Adm*



Museo León Trotsky



Weekends at the Plaza Hidalgo are festive, with musicians and mime artists entertaining the crowd

La Malinche

Mystery surrounds La Malinche, the indigenous woman who was Cortés' mistress, translator, and trusted negotiator. It is believed that she was sold into slavery after her father's death. Whether she was a victim or an opportunist is debated, but Mexicans often view her as a traitor to her people. She lived in Coyoacán with Cortés' son.

5 Bazar de Sábado

This festive Saturday-only shopping event is housed in an old colonial mansion. Dozens of tastefully decorated booths displaying exquisite decorative and functional art fill the rooms around the courtyard. Intricate silver jewelry, hand-embroidered clothing, papier-mâché figures, hand-carved and painted woodwork, and ceramics are on offer. The mansion's courtyard is home to the El Bazar de Sábado Restaurant (*see p93*). ☎ *Plaza San Jacinto 13 • Map S3 • 10am–7pm Sat*

6 Ex-Convento e Iglesia del Carmen

Built for Carmelite monks in the 17th century, three beautiful mosaic-tiled domes adorn the church. The next-door museum, Museo del Carmen, offers displays of exceptional religious art. A basement crypt discovered



The domes of the Museo del Carmen

in 1914 contains the mummified bodies of priests, nuns, and nobility. On the top floor is a chapel with a Baroque altar.

☎ *Av Revolución 4, San Ángel • Map T3 • 5616-1504 • 10am–5pm Tue–Sun • Adm for museum, free Sun*



Frida Kahlo's studio

7 Museo Casa Estudio Diego Rivera y Frida Kahlo

Built by fellow muralist, friend, and architect Juan O'Gorman in 1931–2, the complex has two buildings joined by a second-floor walkway. The larger white studio was Diego Rivera's, where he painted many of his best known oils. The smaller blue one was Frida Kahlo's when she lived here with Rivera. Diego's has been left unaltered, with some of the paintings still standing on easels. ☎ *Calle Diego Rivera and Altavista • Map S2 • 5550-1518 • 10am–6pm Tue–Sun • Adm*

8 Museo Nacional de la Acuarela

This internationally renowned museum was founded by celebrated artist Alfredo Guati Rojo and his wife. It has a permanent exhibit on the history of watercolor in Mexico, an international section, and galleries displaying contemporary works by Mexican artists. Works by masters such as Pastor Velazquez, Manuel M. Ituarte, Eduardo Solares, and Leandro Izaguirre adorn the gallery walls. ☎ *Salvador Novo 88 • Map V2 • 5554-1801 • 10am–6pm Tue–Sun • Free*

9 Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil

The museum's permanent collection of early 20th-century Mexican masters includes paintings by José Clemente Orozco, David Alfaro Siqueiros, Diego Rivera, Gunther Gerzso, Wolfgang Paalen, and others. The collection was assembled by Dr. Álgar and Carmen Carrillo Gil and is housed in a bright, modern three-story building in San Ángel. The museum is noted for its exceptional temporary exhibits featuring Mexican and international contemporary art.

📍 *Av Revolución 1608 • Map T2 • 5550-6260 • 10am–6pm Tue–Sun • Adm, free Sun • www.museodeartecarrillogil.com*



Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil

10 Museo Soumaya

This private museum features Latin America's largest collection of sculptures in marble, bronze, and terracotta by famed French sculptor Auguste Rodin (1840–1917). The collection includes *Burghers of Calais*, *The Kiss*, *Eve*, *The Eternal Spring*, and many other fine sculptures. Other collections include 18th- and 19th-century Mexican portraits, the Art of New Spain, and works by international artists such as Edgar Degas, Paul Gauguin, and Camille Claudelle. The museum also displays temporary exhibits by renowned Mexican and international artists.

📍 *Av Revolución and Río Magdalena, Plaza Loreto • 5616-3731 • 10:30am–6:30pm Wed–Mon (till 8:30pm Fri & Sat) • Adm • www.soumaya.com*

A Stroll Through Coyoacán

Morning



Begin at the **Museo Nacional de la Acuarela** located on Salvador Novo, south of Avenida Francisco Sosa. After viewing the excellent watercolors, walk back to Avenida Francisco Sosa along one of the prettiest cobblestone streets of Coyoacán with its many attractive old colonial mansions and the charming yellow Church of Santa Catarina built in the middle of 17th century. Cross the street into the garden of the cultural center, Casa de la Cultura Jesús Reyes Heróles (No. 202). Farther along is the **Jardín del Centenario** (see p47). View the Fountain of the Coyotes. Move to the adjacent Plaza Hidalgo and admire the interior of the Iglesia de San Juan Bautista. Explore the area around the plaza. Lunch at trendy **Los Danzantes** (see p93).

Afternoon



Head north on Allende for three blocks to **Mercado de Coyoacán** (see p52) and soak in the sights, sounds, and smells in this pretty market where colorful arrays of fresh fruits and vegetables, *piñatas*, toys, and crafts are on sale amid the tantalizing smell of Mexican food. Carry on to Londres to visit the **Museo Frida Kahlo** (see p89) where the famous artist was born, lived, and painted. Continue on to Viena and turn right to visit **Museo León Trotsky** (see p89). Head back to Plaza Hidalgo for some of Coyoacán's renowned ice cream at **Helados La Siberia** (see p93).





Left **Bust of Diego Rivera** Center **Museo Dolores Olmedo** Right **Courtyard, Museo Frida Kahlo**

TOP 10 Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera, and Mexican National Art

1 National Art

After the Civil War ended in 1920, President Álvaro Obregón decided that education and a new form of distinctly Mexican art would help heal the wounds of the war and unite the country.

2 The First Murals

As part of the policy, the government commissioned Diego Rivera in 1922. He painted *The Creation*, in the Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso (see p68).

3 Artistic Syndicate

The Revolutionary Syndicate of Technical Workers, Painters, and Sculptors was formed in 1922 with the intent to focus on public art, rather than easel painting.

4 Diego Rivera (1886–1957)

A master painter, he was trained in Mexico and Europe, and was known for his bright, bold figures and visual story telling.

5 Frida Kahlo (1907–54)

A self-taught artist, Frida created paintings that captured her emotions and political ideals in a unique style combining realist and surrealist elements.

6 Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo Romance

Individually they created vastly different art but together their tumultuous relationship came to embody 20th-century Mexican art.

7 Homes and Studios

Frida lived and painted in her Coyoacán home, now Museo Frida Kahlo (see p89), for much of her life. After their marriage Rivera built his San Ángel studio, now Museo Casa Estudio Diego Rivera y Frida Kahlo (see p90). They lived there for a time, and this is where he did most of his painting. After Frida died, Diego built a new studio nearby, now known as the Museo Diego Rivera Anahuacalli (see p97).

8 Museo Dolores Olmedo

A friend and patron of Diego Rivera, Dolores Olmedo Patiño collected his work and made a museum of her estate (see p95).

9 Frida Kahlo's Most Famous Works

Frida Kahlo's *Two Fridas* is at the Museo de Arte Moderno (see p83) and *Self-Portrait with a Monkey* and *The Broken Spine* are at Museo Dolores Olmedo.

10 Diego Rivera's Most Famous Works

The most visited mural is *Epic of the Mexican People* in the Palacio Nacional (see pp14–15). *Man the Controller of the Universe* in the Palacio de Bellas Artes (see pp20–21) is a re-creation of his Rockefeller Center mural. *Dream of a Sunday Afternoon in the Alameda Central* is in Museo Mural Diego Rivera (see p51).





Los Danzantes

TOP 10 Places to Eat

1 Helados Siberia
This legendary ice cream shop has an excellent selection of flavors. ☎ *Plaza Jardín del Centenario 3, Col Coyoacán • Map X2*
• Cash only • \$

2 Café El Parnaso
The outdoor tables in this café and bookstore are a great spot to enjoy a light meal or have a coffee. *Empanadas* with meat, fish, or vegetarian fillings, omelets, and pastries are most popular. ☎ *Carrillo Puerto 2, Plaza Jardín Centenario, Col Coyoacán • Map X2 • 5554-2225 • \$\$*

3 Cantina La Coyoacana
This traditional family cantina with its bullfighting decor serves Mexican specialties in a circa-1932 mansion with an antique bar, stained-glass windows, and a great ambience. ☎ *Higuera 14, Col Coyoacán • Map X2 • 5658-5337*
• Mon–Sat • \$\$

4 Fonda San Ángel
Mexican specialties with exceptional sauces are served in this cozy restaurant. ☎ *Plaza San Jacinto 3, Col San Ángel • Map T3*
• 5550-1641 • www.fondasanangel.com.mx • \$\$\$\$

5 Los Danzantes
Contemporary Mexican fusion cuisine with Oaxacan flavors and a creative twist is served here. ☎ *Plaza Jardín Centenario 12, Col Coyoacán • Map W3 • 5658-6451 • www.losdanzantes.com • \$\$\$\$*

Price Categories

For a three course meal for one with half a bottle of wine (or equivalent meal), taxes, and extra charges. **\$** under 150 pesos
\$\$ 150–250 pesos
\$\$\$ 250–350 pesos
\$\$\$\$ 350–450 pesos
\$\$\$\$\$ over 450 pesos

6 San Ángel Inn
Housed in an old Carmelite monastery, this fine restaurant offers both formal and casual dining. ☎ *Diego Rivera 50, Col San Ángel • Map S2 • 5616-2222 • www.sanangelinn.com • \$\$\$\$\$*

7 Entre Vero
This attractive and informal bistro serves Uruguayan specialties. ☎ *Jardín Centenario 14-C, Col Coyoacán • Map W2 • 5659-0066 • \$\$\$\$*

8 Tasca Manolo
This restaurant's menu is international eclectic, with traditional Spanish entrées and Mexican favorites. ☎ *Av de la Paz 32, Col San Ángel • Map T2 • 5550-9191 • \$\$\$\$*

9 Cluny
Savory French entrées and dessert crepes attract diners to this restaurant. ☎ *Av de la Paz 57, Col San Ángel • Map T2 • 5550-7350 • www.cluny.com.mx • \$\$*

10 El Bazar de Sábado Restaurant
This café is housed in the courtyard of the Bazar de Sábado (see p90). ☎ *Plaza San Jacinto 13, Col San Ángel • Map S3 • 5550-0772 • 10am–1pm Sat brunch, 1–6pm Sat lunch • www.fondasanangel.com.mx • \$\$\$*



Small restaurants may only accept cash; vegetarians might want to ask about cooking oil as animal fat is frequently used



Left Tenayuca Center Canal, Xochimilco Floating Gardens Right Plaza de las Tres Culturas

Greater Mexico City

BEYOND THE TRADITIONAL AREAS brimming with attractions in Mexico City, there are many other fascinating sites away from the center and visitable by taxi or bus tour. Every year millions visit Villa de Guadalupe, the holiest shrine in Mexico. Locals and visitors alike flock to Xochimilco to tour the ancient canals, while art lovers enjoy the nearby Museo Dolores Olmedo. Weekends and holidays are perfect times for excursions to the cool, refreshing pine-forested mountains of the National Parks. Ecological parks offer varied outdoor activities in the heart of nature.

10 Sights

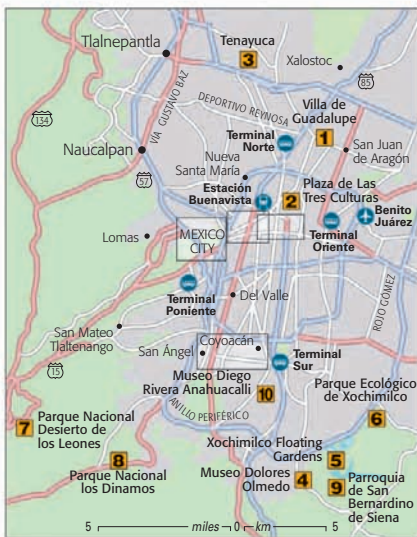
- 1 Villa de Guadalupe
- 2 Plaza de las Tres Culturas
- 3 Tenayuca and Santa Cecilia Acatitlán
- 4 Museo Dolores Olmedo
- 5 Xochimilco Floating Gardens
- 6 Parque Ecológico Xochimilco
- 7 Parque Nacional Desierto de los Leones
- 8 Parque Nacional los Dinamos
- 9 Parroquia de San Bernardino de Siena
- 10 Museo Diego Rivera Anahuacalli



Parque Nacional Desierto de los Leones



Nueva Basílica, Villa de Guadalupe





Capilla del Cerrito, Villa de Guadalupe

1 Villa de Guadalupe
Mexico's holiest Catholic shrine is dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe, the beautiful dark-skinned image of the Virgin that appeared to Juan Diego in 1531 and left an imprint of her image on his cloak. The cloak is displayed in the Nueva Basílica. There are numerous chapels, basilicas, and holy sites here, each one commemorating an aspect of this holy site. The Basílica Antigua, with its beautiful Baroque façade and twin towers, housed the image of Guadalupe from 1709 until the Nueva Basílica was consecrated in 1976 (see pp30–31).

2 Plaza de las Tres Culturas
Tlatelolco was the site of the largest Aztec commercial trading center. The Spanish conquistadors destroyed the Aztec palaces, temples, and ceremonial center making way for the plaza and the Church of Santiago. Much of the ruins, including the main pyramid with its twin temples, have been excavated. Modern buildings surround the plaza, giving rise to the name which means "plaza of three cultures," for the Aztec, colonial, and modern era structures. ☉ Eje Central & Ricardo Flores Magón • Map B2 • Ruins 9am–6pm Tue–Sun • Adm free

3 Tenayuca and Santa Cecilia Acatitlán

These two ancient pyramids located near each other in the north of Mexico City make it possible to visit both archeological sites in a single taxi trip. The oldest, Tenayuca was built in the 11th century before the Aztecs arrived in the valley. The pyramid was enlarged every 52 years, six times in all, and twin staircases lead to the temples on the top. The second pyramid, Santa Cecilia Acatitlán, dates from 1300–1521, and was used to worship the sun god Huitzilopochtli and the rain god Tláloc. The temple at the top of the pyramid has been carefully and authentically reconstructed, and visitors can climb the staircase to explore the building (see p41).

4 Museo Dolores Olmedo

Housed in the gracious 17th-century Hacienda La Noria is the largest private collection of easel works by renowned Mexican artists Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo. Philanthropist Dolores Olmedo Patiño was Diego Rivera's friend, patron, and occasional model, and she collected 145 of his works. The Frida Kahlo collection includes 25 of her works. ☉ Av México 5843 Col La Noria, Xochimilco • Map B4 • 5555-1221
• 10am–6pm Tue–Sun • Adm, free Tue
• www.museodoloresolmedo.org.mx



Museo Dolores Olmedo



Dolores Olmedo Patiño donated her private art collections and hacienda to Mexico upon her death in 2002

Tlalpan

Located to the south of the National University is the old colonial neighbourhood of Tlalpan. The central plaza with pleasant gardens and shady paths is bordered by the pretty 16th-century Baroque Iglesia de San Agustín de las Cuevas, and several fine restaurants and shops. The narrow streets are lined with 17th- and 18th-century mansions.

5 Xochimilco Floating Gardens

Popular with both locals and tourists, many come to the floating gardens to glide leisurely in *trajineras* (flat-bottomed barges) through the shallow waters of the ancient Aztec canals lined with flower festooned nurseries and homes. Decorated with brightly colored flower motifs, the barges are available for rent by the hour (see pp28–9).



Parque Ecológico de Xochimilco

6 Parque Ecológico de Xochimilco

This 740-acre (300-hectare) park was created to help preserve and maintain Xochimilco's canals and floating gardens and is protected by UNESCO. *Trajineras* provide boat trips through the natural areas to see native and cultivated flora and various species of birds; walking paths also curve through the park. There is a visitor center, a museum, and shows that explain how the Aztecs built the floating islands (see pp28–9).

7 Parque Nacional Desierto de los Leones

Mexico's first National Park is a beautiful mountainside forest of oak and pine, with numerous streams and the remains of a fascinating Carmelite monastery to explore. The monastery dates from 1611, and the name, "Desert of the Lions," refers to the biblical Elijah who lived isolated in the wilderness. Beautiful flower gardens surround the monastery. There are many recreational options, such as hiking and biking trails and on weekends there are trail horses for rent. It is a good idea to speak with a ranger before leaving the well-traveled areas of the park, as sometimes theft is a problem in less popular sections. A restaurant housed in the monastery offers Mexican favorites. ☎ *Camino al Desierto de los Leones* • Map A4 • Taxi • Daily 9am–6pm • Adm • Monastery open 10am–6pm Tue–Sun

8 Parque Nacional los Dinamos

Popular with nature lovers, this wooded expanse borders the ravine of the Magdalena River. Favorite activities here include walking, hiking, and biking. Horses are often available for hire on weekends and holidays, and there are plenty of picnic spots. The park also offers the best rock climbing in the area, with walls of varying difficulty reaching as high as 100 ft (30 m). There are several different rock formations requiring a variety of climbing techniques. Weekends and holidays are the best time to visit. If you plan to explore the less-frequented areas of the park it is advisable that you first speak with one of the park's rangers. ☎ *Magdalena Contreras* • Map A4 • 9am–5pm daily • Adm free

9 Parroquia de San Bernardino de Siena

Flower-filled gardens surround this graceful church. Ornate doorways lead to one of Mexico's last surviving 16th-century altarpieces. This magnificent *retablo* has paintings by Baltazar de Echave and sculptures by Luis de Arciniega. A unique feature of this church is the pre-Hispanic skulls mounted on the side walls, with a sign reminding parishioners how to make a good confession. ☎ *Pino and Violeta, Xochimilco* • Map C4 • Adm free



Museo Diego Rivera Anahuacalli

10 Museo Diego Rivera Anahuacalli

Designed by Diego Rivera to house his spectacular collection of thousands of pre-Hispanic Mexican artifacts, this huge, black, volcanic rock building incorporates Mayan and Toltec design elements. The collection includes figurines from Tlatilco, masks from Teotihuacán, and the sculptures of four Aztec deities, the goddess of corn and the gods of wind, fire, and rain. Rivera died before the building was completed, but his two-story studio is decorated as he planned to use it. Large sketches of some of his murals hang on the walls. ☎ *Calle Museo 150, Col San Pablo Tepetlapa* • Map B3 • 5617-4310 • Taxi • 10:30am–5pm Tue–Sun (till 4pm Fri) • Adm; all visits are guided • www.anahuacallimuseo.org

A Walk Through Colonia Condesa

Afternoon

Take the **Turibus** (see p104) and get off at stop #3, or take a taxi to Av Michoacán (Map F6). This beautiful residential neighborhood has tree-shaded avenues and Art Deco houses, and is a favorite with writers, artists, and musicians. This trendy area boasts cafés that are popular with the city's young professionals. Try **La Buena Tierra** (see p99) for excellent organic fare, or the nearby **Mamá Rosa's** (see p99) for Italo-Mexican dishes. After lunch, continue along Av Michoacán and cross Av México (Map H5), entering the pretty **Parque México** (see p46) and walk to the Fountain of the Water Jugs which has a statue of a nude woman holding two ceramic jugs with water flowing from them. Once part of Mexico's premier horse racing track, this oval park features wide shady paths, lush landscaping, and beautiful fountains. Exit the park at the northeast corner on to Av México. Continue past the lovely 14-story Art Deco masterpiece Edificio Basurto by architect Francisco J. Serrano and completed in 1945. Admire the lovely, dome-shaped white Art Deco fountain in Plaza Popocatepetl (Map H5), designed by José Gómez Echeverría in 1927. Walk to the right, almost all the way around the circular plaza, exiting on to Av México. Continue on to Av Michoacán, passing Art Deco buildings and then head back to the Turibus stop where you can have dessert or snacks at one of the many sidewalk restaurants.





Left **Parque Hundido** Right **Avenida Insurgentes**

TOP 10 Insurgentes Sur

1 Avenida Insurgentes
When the university was built in the far south of Mexico City in the 1950s, this broad avenue was created to link it with the rest of the city. Avenida Insurgentes today stretches for 28 miles (45 km) and Insurgentes Sur, the southern stretch, is a happening area. ☎ *Map K4*

2 Roma
Colonia Roma, with its tree-lined streets and varied architecture, was developed in the early 20th century. The area, popular with wealthy residents, is known for its contemporary art galleries and cafés. ☎ *Map G4*

3 Casa Lamm
This popular culture center, bookstore, art gallery, and restaurant is housed in a 1911-mansion. ☎ *Av Álvaro Obregón 99, Col Roma • Map K6 • 5514-4899 • Art Gallery 10am–6pm daily, Bookstore 11am–8pm Mon–Sat, 10am–7pm Sun • www.lamm.com.mx*

4 Condesa
Colonia Condesa, with pleasant, tree-lined streets and parks, is home to many writers, artists, musicians, and other creative people. There are also many trendy restaurants here. ☎ *Map F5*

5 World Trade Center
This glass skyscraper has a revolving restaurant, Bellini, (see p99) on the 45th floor. ☎ *Montecito 38, Col Nápoles • 9000-6000 • www.torrewtc.com*

6 Polyforum Siqueiros
Conceived and designed by the master-muralist David Alfaro Siqueiros, this futuristic building integrates modern architecture, sculpture, and art forms. It also showcases sculpted murals. ☎ *Av Insurgentes Sur 701 Col Nápoles • Map B3 • 5536-4520 • 9am–6pm • Adm • www.polyforumsiqueiros.com.mx*

7 Plaza de Toros México
The largest bull ring in the Western Hemisphere, it seats more than 40,000 spectators. The top matadors perform on Sunday afternoons from November through February. ☎ *Augusto Rodin 241 • 5611-4413 • www.lamexico.com*

8 Estadio Azul
The 39,000-seat stadium is home to one of Mexico City's most popular soccer clubs, Cementeros de Cruz Azul. ☎ *Insurgentes Sur at Holbein, Col Nápoles • www.cruz-azul.com.mx*

9 Parque Hundido
This park with flower gardens, fountains, pine trees, and walking paths lined with replicas of pre-Hispanic sculpture, is a neighborhood favorite (see p47).

10 Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
Latin America's largest university is also known for its modern architecture and exceptional murals on the facades of several buildings (see p45).



Left **Mamá Rosa's**

Price Categories

For a three course meal for one with half a bottle of wine (or equivalent meal), taxes, and extra charges.	\$ under 150 pesos
	\$ 150–250 pesos
	\$\$\$ 250–350 pesos
	\$\$\$\$ 350–450 pesos
	\$\$\$\$\$ over 450 pesos

10 Places to Eat

1 Bellini
Enjoy fine dining in elegant surroundings with international cuisine, including entrées such as Canadian lobster and *spaghetti cartoccio*. 📍 *World Trade Center, Montecito 38, Col Nápoles • 9000-8305 • www.bellini.com.mx • \$\$\$\$\$*

2 La Buena Tierra
This popular café offers many organic foods and fresh juices, plus creative fish, chicken, and vegetarian entrées. 📍 *Atlixco 94 Col Condesa • Map G6 • 5211-4242 • www.labuenatierra.com • \$\$*

3 Mamá Rosa's
This Italo-Mexican restaurant offers a wide range of standard dishes as well as creative ones such as Jumping Jack Flash *fajitas* and *arrachera* Selena. 📍 *Atlixco 105, Col Condesa • Map G6 • 5211-1640 • www.mamamosas.com • \$\$\$*

4 Don Asado
Fire-roasted Uruguayan meats and wood fired pizzas are the specialty at this popular café. 📍 *Michoacán 77, Col Condesa • Map G6 • 5286-0789 • www.donasado.com • \$\$*

5 Matisse
This cozy restaurant serves European cuisine. Try the baked chicken in blackberry sauce and duck à la blueberry. 📍 *Amsterdam 260, Col Condesa • Map H5 • 5264-5853 • www.matisse.com.mx • \$\$\$\$\$*

6 Specia
Specia serves Polish and Eastern European cuisine. Specialties at this restaurant include roast duck, excellent goulash, wild mushroom soup, and blinis. 📍 *Amsterdam 241, Col Condesa • Map H5 • 5564-1367 • \$\$\$\$\$*

7 Tecla
Sample innovative appetizers such as squash flowers stuffed with goat cheese and served with *chipotle* sauce at this restaurant. Entrées include Roquefort steak and trout. 📍 *Av Durango 186A, Col Roma • Map H4 • 5525-4920 • \$\$\$*

8 Contramar
Casual bright decor and fresh seafood prepared with a refined flourish make Contramar a highly popular choice. 📍 *Durango 200, Col Roma • Map H4 • 5514-3169 • 1:30–6:30pm Reservations recommended • \$\$\$\$*

9 Litoral
Litoral serves good Mexican cuisine such as crab tacos, onion soup, and salmon. 📍 *55B Tamaulipas, Col Condesa • Map G5 • 5286-2015 • www.restaurantelitoral.com • \$\$\$*

10 Bistrot Mosaico
Try some of the excellent French food served at this bistro. 📍 *Michoacán 10, Col Condesa • Map G5 • 5584-2932 • \$\$\$*







STREETSMART

Planning Your Trip
102

Getting to Mexico City
103

Getting Around
104

Things to Avoid
105

Budget Tips
106

Etiquette
107

Security and Health
108

Banking and
Communications
109

Shopping Tips
110

Eating and
Accommodation Tips
111

Places to Stay
112–117

MEXICO CITY'S TOP 10



Left **Mexico City, a welcoming place for children** Right **Tourist information kiosk**

TOP 10 Planning Your Trip

1 Visitor Centers
Before arriving, check the website for the Secretariat of Tourism (Federal) and the Virtual Guide. After arrival, stop by one of the offices or kiosks of Departamento de Turismo del Distrito Federal for information.

2 Media
Current events and cultural programs are listed in the weekly *Tiempo Libre*. The biweekly *DF por Travesías* covers clubs, bars, and restaurants. The English daily *The Herald*, is also available in newsstands.

3 Internet
Many hotels offer Internet access either at a business center or in the hotel lobby while some also offer direct access from the rooms. Many tourist areas have Internet cafés.

4 Maps
The Visitor Centers distribute an excellent, free *Mexico City Tourist Map*. Both Spanish and English versions are available. *Guía Roji* also has good city maps.

5 Visas and Identification
Citizens of North America and many countries in Europe and Latin America do not need a visa. Tourist permits should be obtained at the border. Entry requirements are prone to change so check

before travel. A passport is the most reliable identification. Citizens returning to the US will need a valid passport or other accepted official ID.

6 Insurance
Obtain travel and medical insurance before arriving in Mexico. If you are entering Mexico by car, you must carry Mexican auto insurance.

7 When to Go
Mexico City is a year-round destination. March and early April are particularly beautiful.

8 What to Take
Conservative city-casual clothing is suitable for most occasions. Mexicans do not wear shorts though. Try to avoid carrying high-priced items.

9 How Long to Stay
A week is ideal, allowing three to four days to explore the Centro Histórico and the museums in Bosque de Chapultepec. Two days are best for exploring Coyoacán, San Ángel, and Xochimilco. Allow a full day for Teotihuacán.

10 Traveling with Children
Children must have proof of citizenship. If the child is traveling alone or with just one parent, carry notarized letters of permission from the absent parent.

Directory

Secretariat of Tourism (Federal) – SECTUR
Av Presidente Masarik 172, Col Polanco • 01-800-987-8224, 3002-6300 • www.sectur.gob.mx

Virtual Guides
www.mexicocity.com.mx, www.mexicocity.gob.mx

Infotour
078 • 24-hour English language information

Visitor Center Mexico City Airport, National Arrivals
5786-9002 • www.mexicocity.gob.mx

Visitor Center Zona Rosa
Paseo de la Reforma s/n, next to Angel de la Independencia

Visitor Center Centro Histórico
Next to the Catedral Metropolitana

Visitor Center Bellas Artes
Av Juárez and Angela Peralta

Visitor Center Bosque de Chapultepec
In front of the Museo Nacional de Antropología

Visitor Center Coyoacán
Casa Municipal, Plaza Hidalgo 1

Visitor Center Xochimilco
Nuevo Embarcadero





Aeropuerto Internacional Benito Juárez

TOP 10 Getting to Mexico City

1 By Air

Many North, Central, and South American as well as European airlines have flights to the city.

✎ *Aeropuerto Internacional Benito Juárez • 2482-2400*
• www.asa.gob.mx

2 Arriving

Stop at immigration to fill out a form to obtain a Tourist Card. It can be valid for 60–180 days.

3 Getting into the City

Travelers with luggage, on a tight schedule, or who want the safest choice should take a prepaid airport taxi. There is a Metro stop at the airport, but luggage is not permitted onboard.

4 Metro

If you have little luggage, the Metro is an option. Follow the signs to station Terminal Aérea which is on Metro line 5. If you are heading downtown, take the train to the Pantitlán station and switch to line 1. Depending on your final destination you may need to switch lines again. Check the map at the terminal before boarding.

5 Taxi

If you are using a taxi, purchase your prepaid fare from a booth of the Transportación Terrestre. Rates are set by zone, and are for the taxi not per person. The airport taxis are yellow

and white, and they are safer than regular taxis.

6 Driving into Mexico City

There are excellent highways leading into Mexico City. Mexico 15-D, 57-D, and 85-D are the main toll roads from the north and west. Mexico 95-D and 150-D enter from the south and east. These are the fastest and most direct routes, and the toll roads (signified by the D) have less traffic. In other roads, traffic is almost always very heavy.

7 Train

The once-excellent passenger train system in Mexico is no longer operational. Currently no passenger trains connect to Mexico City.

8 Bus

Buses are the most popular way to travel between cities. First class buses have comfortable seats, videos, and make fewer stops. Ticket Bus has a central reservations system for major bus companies. ETN, with services to north-central Mexico, and UNO, with services to Oaxaca, Chiapas, Veracruz, and the southeast, are the luxury bus operators. Greyhound offers bus trips to major US cities. ✎ *Ticket Bus: 5133-2424, 01-800-702-8000*
• www.ticketbus.com.mx
✎ *ETN: 01-800-800-0386* • www.etn.com.mx ✎ *UNO: 5133-2424, 01-800-702-8000*

• www.uno.com.mx

✎ *Greyhound: 01-800-710-8819* • www.greyhound.com.mx

9 Bus Terminals

There are four main bus terminals. Terminal Central de Autobuses del Norte serves northern destinations, Terminal Central de Autobuses Sur serves south, Terminal de Autobuses de Pasajeros de Oriente serves east, and Terminal de Autobuses del Poniente serve the west. ✎ *Terminal Central de Autobuses del Norte: Av Cien Metros 4907 • 5587-1552* ✎ *Terminal Central de Autobuses Sur: Av Taxqueña 1320 • 5689-9745* ✎ *Terminal de Autobuses de Pasajeros de Oriente: Ignacio Zaragoza 200 • 5133-2444* ✎ *Terminal de Autobuses del Poniente: Río Tacubaya 232, Col Real del Monte • 5271-4519*

10 Rental Cars

The major rental car companies have booths at the airport. It is almost always cheaper to book a car before arriving in Mexico. Driving in the city is challenging; you can consider hiring a car with a driver or using hotel and *sitio* taxis (licensed and regulated taxis). You must obey the *Hoy No Circula* law, introduced to curb pollution, which says that one day a week, based on the last digit of the vehicle license plate, the car cannot be driven in Greater Mexico City.



Highly adept pickpockets and thieves hang around the airport and Metro, so watch your belongings carefully



Left Metro subway car Right Turibus

TOP 10 Getting Around

1 Metro

The Metro subway system is clean, efficient, cheap, and easy-to-use (see backflap). During rush hour it is extremely crowded. Some cars are then set aside for women and children. ☎ 5am–midnight Mon–Fri, 6am–midnight Sat, 7am–midnight Sun • 2 pesos per ride • www.metro.df.gob.mx

2 Buses, Peseros, Metrobus

Mexico City has a vast, confusing, and poorly marked bus system that covers most of the city. Routes and numbers change frequently, there are buses of different sizes, and the signs on the buses are often incorrect. ☎ 5am–10pm daily • About 5 pesos depending on the bus size and the distance traveled

3 Taxi

There are three types of taxi services. Roving cabs are hailed on the street but these are not recommended. Taxis from a *sitio* stand are safer. Hotel taxis are the most reliable and the driver often speaks English. Some taxis are metered, and others charge a flat fare. ☎ *Sitio Taxi Service*: Servitaxi • 5516-6020, 5516-6025 ☎ *Sitio Taxi Service*: Radio-Taxi • 5566-0077

4 Car with Driver

A good, time-efficient option for seeing parts of the city not readily

accessible by walking, bus tours, or using the Turibus is to hire a car and driver by the hour. The price varies by the services provided, but drivers will wait while you explore, accompany you into markets, and drive to places that would be difficult to get to any other way. ☎ About 100–350 pesos per hour

5 Turibus

For a daily fee you can hop on and off the bus all day long at 28 stops, conveniently located close to the major attractions in Centro Histórico, along Paseo de la Reforma, through Bosque de Chapultepec, Polanco, Condesa, and Zona Rosa. ☎ 5133-2488 • 9am–9pm daily (9pm–1am Zócalo, Chapultepec, Polanco) • www.turibus.com.mx

6 Turibus South and Teotihuacán

Trips to the ancient city of Teotihuacán on Turibus include admission, guided tour of the archeological zone, and snacks as well as transportation. ☎ 5141-1360 • 9am from Auditorio Nacional, 9:45am from Zócalo daily • Adult 550 pesos, children 300 pesos

7 Trolleybus

The trolleybus offers narrated tours in Spanish, and provides a good introduction to the major sites. ☎ *Tranvía Turístico Cultural*: Av Juárez 66 • 5542-0083 • 10am–5pm

daily • 30 pesos ☎ *Paseo por Coyoacán*: Av Hidalgo at Calle Allende • 5559-2433 • 11am–6pm daily • 45 pesos

8 Walking

Walking, during the day, is a great way to explore many of the popular sites. In Centro Histórico it is quicker to walk between sites. The monuments along Paseo de la Reforma is best viewed by walking its length. Coyoacán, San Ángel, Polanco, and Bosque de Chapultepec are all great for walking. Take care while crossing roads.

9 Tours

Many hotels have affiliated travel agencies that arrange tours to the most popular sites and usually feature bilingual guides. Nightlife tours typically include dinner, a show, and stop at Plaza Garibaldi. Sunday tours to bullfights are also organized (see pp62–3). ☎ *Mallorca Travel Agency*: Paseo de la Reforma 105 Hotel Sevilla Palace • 5705-2424 • www.viajesmallorca.com.mx

10 Car

Driving in Mexico City's poorly marked maze of one way streets makes navigation tricky. The *Hoy No Circula* law, introduced to curb vehicular pollution, is strictly enforced. ☎ www.mexicocity.com.mx/nocircula.html





Left **Tourists wearing hats in the sun** Center **Traffic snarls** Right **Street food stall**

Top 10 Things to Avoid

1 Driving in Mexico City

Avoid driving anywhere in greater Mexico City during rush hours. Also, never leave any of your valuables in a parked car.

2 Street Crime

Pickpockets and purse or camera snatching are the most common threats and can occur anywhere. Avoid wearing expensive jewelry and leave your valuables in a hotel safe. Stick to the main tourist streets when walking, and avoid walking at night. Use hotel or *sitio* taxis for evening transportation.

3 Street Taxi

Never use a street taxi for transportation. Rather use hotel or *sitio* taxis. A high proportion of violent crimes against tourists results from using roving taxis.

4 Food and Water

The tap water in Mexico City should not be consumed. Some of the high-quality hotels have their own water-filtration systems. Many higher-priced restaurants use filtered or bottled water. In casual or lower-priced restaurants only drink bottled beverages without ice. Avoid street food in general, but in particular food that is not freshly cooked and served hot, or that uses uncooked greens such as lettuce and cilantro (coriander).

5 Turista

Some travelers take a few days to adjust to the local foods and may get *turista*. Nausea, diarrhea, stomach cramps, and a light fever are the symptoms. If it occurs, drink plenty of bottled water, and eat bland, well-cooked food for a while. Symptoms should disappear within a few days. But if not, consult a doctor. In the initial days after arriving in Mexico City it helps to eat moderately and avoid highly spiced and unfamiliar foods.

6 Sunburn and Dehydration

The sun is intense in the high altitudes of Mexico City, and it is a good idea to apply sunscreen and wear a broad brimmed sunhat for protection. Wear sunglasses for your eyes. Dehydration is a common problem, and it is important to carry bottled water with you and drink liquids regularly.

7 Altitude Sickness

Mexico City is at 7,350 ft (2,240 m) above sea level, and if you are arriving from a much lower altitude, you should allow a few days before engaging in strenuous activity. If you have symptoms such as headaches or shortness of breath, it helps to drink plenty of water and be moderate in the use of coffee, tea, and alcohol.

8 Pollution

Air pollution can pose a health risk in Mexico City, especially for the elderly, young children, and people with heart or respiratory problems. The city is located in a large valley surrounded by high mountains with thermal inversions, which often trap pollutants. Smoking is prohibited in indoor public places, but there are some exceptions. Fines are steep so check before lighting up.

9 Watch Your Step

Mexico City was built on an old lake bed, and everywhere you go you will see buildings that have sunk below street level, and many that are tilting as well. The city has also experienced severe earthquakes, which have left uneven streets and sidewalks in many places. Watch your step while you walk.

10 Weather and Temperature Changes

Most tourists will notice minor weather changes, with cool mornings and nights that require a jacket. Rain storms can occur in the afternoon at any time of the year, and an umbrella or rain jacket will be useful. In winters make sure either your hotel is heated or that it provides extra blankets. In summers you will want either an air conditioned room or a good fan.





Left **Band** playing live at the Zócalo Right **Guide** explaining architecture to tourists

TOP 10 Budget Tips

1 Airline Deals

The best prices are obtained by comparison shopping, and the Internet is a great source for checking ticket prices for various airlines. If you are flying within the country after your arrival in Mexico City, check Mexican airlines for reduced rate advance purchase coupons, but you must purchase them before arriving in Mexico.

2 Package Deals

When shopping for the best airfares, check the websites for packages that include accommodations as well. Rates will likely be higher during Christmas, Easter, and the summer months. Some hotels offer deals that include city tours or tickets to events.

3 Hotel Discounts

Room rates fluctuate depending on time of year and if festivals or conventions are being held. Business hotels in Mexico City often offer good rates for weekends, and some hotels in Centro Histórico offer discounts as well. Mid-range and budget hotels may offer discount for cash payments.

4 Free Museum Day

Many museums offer free admission either on Sunday or Tuesday. Some museums offer special discounts to students and teachers with ID.

5 Entertainment and Attractions

Several of Mexico City's top attractions are free, including the Palacio Nacional (see pp16–17), Catedral Metropolitana (see pp14–15), and a few of the attractions in Bosque de Chapultepec (see pp24–5). All of the churches, parks, and plazas have free entry.

6 Tours and Guides

Hiring a guide or joining a tour that includes transportation will often save a lot of time and trouble, and sometimes money as well, especially if you are not fluent in Spanish.

7 Public Transportation

Sitio taxis are reasonably safe and are also cheaper than hotel taxis. The Turibus (see p104) is less expensive than cabs if you are visiting sites it covers. The Metro (see p104) also offers cheap, efficient, and quite an extensive service.

8 Free Events

Every Sunday evening Mexico City's Cultural Institute presents free concerts of Mexican talent at the Zócalo. For information on other such events see *Tiempo Libre* (see p102) and check the mexicocity website.

9 Restaurants

Save money by having lunch, from 2pm–

4pm, at one of the many restaurants serving a *comida corrida* (fixed-priced menu).

10 Location

When choosing a hotel consider the transportation method you plan to use within the city to reduce your traveling costs.

Directory

Airlines

- **Aeroméxico:** 5133-4000; www.aeromexico.com
- **Mexicana:** 5448-0990; www.mexicana.com
- **Air Canada:** www.aircanada.com
- **Air France:** www.airfrance.com
- **American Airlines:** www.aa.com
- **British Airways:** www.britishairways.com
- **Continental:** www.continental.com

Travel Websites

- www.airlineconsolidator.com

Best Fares

- www.bestfares.com

Cheap Tickets

- www.cheaptickets.com
- www.exitotravel.com
- www.expedia.com
- www.hotwire.com
- www.orbitz.com
- www.priceline.com
- www.travelocity.com

Free Events

- www.mexicocity.gob.mx



Left **Spanish-English dictionaries** Right **Tourist taking a photograph of a mariachi**

TOP 10 Etiquette

1 Courtesy

Courtesy is important in Mexico City, and even a simple, *buenos dias* (good morning), or *buenas tardes* (good afternoon), is much appreciated. The Mexican communication style is lengthy and indirect; losing your temper or complaining about a situation often makes people less inclined to help you out.

2 Friendly and Helpful

Mexicans are friendly and helpful, especially if you make an attempt to ask questions in Spanish. However, they also do not like to say "no," so they will often respond to a question by giving an answer even if they are not certain. When seeking directions, ask several people. Most employees take their own job responsibilities seriously and will seldom bend the rules or make any exceptions.

3 Language

Many Mexicans speak a few words of English, especially college and high school students, but it helps to know some basic phrases for use at restaurants, with *sitio* taxis, and getting around. Pick up some useful Spanish phrases (see p126-7) and carry a handy Spanish-English dictionary.

4 Service

Many Mexicans will offer a personal service in exchange for a small fee, and there are times when you may want to utilize these services. Hotel and *sitio* taxi drivers can accompany you into markets if you ask them to, wait while you visit an attraction, or pick you up at a specified time – all for a reasonable charge.

5 Attire

In Mexico City people dress conservatively; they wear very little jewelry, and do not wear shorts or sandals. They are tolerant of other styles of attire; however, women traveling alone will do well to dress conservatively when out in public to avoid unwanted attention.

6 Single Women

Mexican *machismo* is very common in the city, and can be both a benefit and a hassle for the single woman traveling alone. On the plus side, men will assist you if you are in difficulty and male tour guides may pay you more attention. You can minimize advances by dressing conservatively and avoiding eye contact. However, if you are still approached a simple "no" and a shake of the head is often enough. Taking a seat will lessen the risk of unwanted attention on a crowded Metro.

7 Public Toilets

Public toilets are not common in the city, but most sit-down restaurants have clean bathrooms for their customers. Many public bathrooms have an attendant and you pay a few pesos to enter; be certain to take the toilet paper they hand out.

8 Time

Mexico City is in the Central Standard Time Zone, which is 6 hours behind Greenwich Mean Time. Although Mexico City has a reputation for not being punctual, most people in tourism and in business are prompt with appointments.

9 Tipping

A tip of 10% is standard in restaurants, but check your bill first as some restaurants add a service charge to the total. For porters and bellhops, 10 pesos per bag is enough. Taxi drivers are tipped if they provide a special service. For tour guides, a tip of 50 or more pesos for four hours is usual.

10 Photography

Mexicans are generally tolerant towards photographers taking pictures, but it is always polite to ask first. Some people will request a small payment, and many indigenous people will refuse to have their picture taken.





Left **Mexican Tourist Police** Center **Hospital Right** **Logo of a pharmacy store chain**

TOP 10 Security and Health

1 Embassies and Consulates

International visitors who lose a passport or have any similar emergency, should contact their embassy immediately.

2 Keeping Documents Safe

Before leaving home, make photocopies of all your important travel papers, including your passport and visa, as well as the numbers of credit cards and the serial numbers of travelers' checks. Keep them in a safe place in your hotel.

3 Crime

Mexico City has a relatively high level of street crime, and it is important to be vigilant at all times. It is best to use ATM machines in safe locations during the day. Leave surplus valuables in the hotel safe. Walk around the city on foot only in daylight hours. Stick to the streets frequented by tourists.

4 Emergencies

In the case of an emergency it is probably best to try and contact your embassy first. The Mexico City Tourist Protection Agency will also help with emergencies and they have staff who speak English. If you cannot reach an English speaking operator, call the SECTUR 24-hour Hotline for help.

5 Police

When approached by the police be polite, remain calm, and explain that you are a tourist. If a policeman asks for a bribe call your embassy immediately.

6 Stay Alert

Mexico City does have crime; however, if you stay alert and take some simple precautions you should be fine. Stay on the main tourist streets when walking, dress conservatively, and avoid carrying or wearing anything that appears to be valuable. Be cautious while using an ATM.

7 Safety

Be especially careful at night, and for transport use a hotel taxi or *sitio* taxi rather than walking or using any other means of public transportation.

8 Public Restrooms

Public restrooms, referred to as *baños* or *sanitarios*, which are clean and hygienic can be found in mid- to large-size restaurants, the lobby area of large hotels, and in major museums and tourist attractions.

9 Medical Care

For basic medical and dental needs, ask your hotel or embassy for help. One of the best hospitals in Mexico City is the Hospital ABC, with staff speaking in English.

10 Pharmacies

The largest and most commonly found pharmacies in Mexico City are Farmacias del Ahorro and Fenix.

Directory

Embassies

- **Australia:** 1101-2200, www.mexico.embassy.gov.au
- **Canada:** 5724-7900, www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/mexico-city
- **USA:** 5080-2000, www.usembassy-mexico.gov
- **Britain:** 5242-8500 www.britishembassy.gov.uk

Banks

- **BBVA Bancomer:** 5226-2663
- **Banamex:** 1226-2639

Lost Cards and Travelers' Checks

- **American Express:** 01800 001 3600
- **MasterCard:** 5480-8000
- **Visa:** 001 800 847 2911

Emergencies

- **Tourist Protection Agency (SECTUR):** 078
- **Ambulance:** 065
- **Police:** 060
- **Missing person or car:** 5658-1111

Medical Care

- **Hospital ABC:** 5230-8000; 1103-1600
- **Mexican Red Cross:** 5395-1111

Pharmacies

- www.fahorro.com.mx





Left **A courier office** Center **Mexican phone card** Right **Telmex logo**

TOP 10 Banking and Communications

1 Exchange

The airport is a good place to exchange foreign currency for pesos. The exchange rate at a *Casa de Cambio* (foreign exchange booths) may be better or worse than what the major branches of large banks offer.

2 ATMs

ATM machines are readily available throughout the city, and are usually available 24 hours a day and seven days a week. However, it is always a good idea to withdraw money during daylight hours and at an off-street machine in a bank or department store for reasons of safety.

3 Banks

Banamex and BBVA Bancomer are the two largest banks in Mexico. There are also numerous foreign banks in the city. Hours are generally 9am–4pm weekdays, and many banks are open on Saturdays from 9am–2pm. It is best to visit a bank in the morning as some services, including currency exchange, are only available until 2pm.

4 Travelers' Checks

Although travelers' checks are one of the safest ways to carry cash, very few places in Mexico City accept them. American Express travelers' checks in US currency are the best choice, and most large

banks and currency exchange offices will cash them. ☎ *American Express: Paseo de la Reforma 350A, at Lancaster • 01800 001 3600, 01800 504 0400 • 9am–6pm Mon–Fri, 9am–1pm Sat*

5 Credit Cards

Visa and MasterCard, and to a lesser extent American Express, are the most accepted cards in Mexico. Most high-end restaurants, large hotels, rental-cars, and high-end tourist shops will accept credit cards. Some hotels offer discounts for cash, while others will add a surcharge to the amount if paid by credit card.

6 Telephone

The country code for Mexico is 52, and the area code for Mexico City is 55. Within the city the important dialing codes are 040 for information and 090 for an international English speaking operator.

7 Phone Cards

Most payphones in Mexico City require a prepaid phone card, known as a Ladatel Card, issued by the main telephone company, Telmex. Available in denominations of 30, 50, and 100 pesos, they can be purchased at newsstands, pharmacies, and grocery stores. The phones are generally very easy to find along the street as well as in gas and Metro stations.

8 Internet

Public access to the Internet is quite easy to find, and is available in the lobby or in the business center of many hotels. Ask at the front desk for the nearest location. Some hotels provide wireless networks, while others offer data access lines. Always learn the rates before using the services. Internet cafés can be found throughout the city and generally charge about 25 pesos an hour.

9 Post Office

The Mexican post office can be slow with the delivery of mail or packages. It is much safer and more reliable to use a courier service. Many hotels sell stamps for letters and post cards, and will also post them.

10 Courier Services

For shipping important documents and parcels a courier service is the best option to use. There are several to choose from, including Federal Express, DHL, Estafeta, AeroMexpress, and United Parcel Service (UPS). They will pick-up packages from your premises with 24 hours advance notice. ☎ *Federal Express: www.fedex.com* ☎ *DHL: www.dhl.com* ☎ *Estafeta: www.estafeta.com* ☎ *AeroMexpress: www.aeromexpress.com.* *mx* ☎ *UPS: www.ups.com*



The symbol for the peso, the unit of currency in Mexico, is \$; this is divided into 100 centavos



Left Mexican handicrafts on display Right A Mexico City market

TOP 10 Shopping Tips

1 Shopping Hours

Department stores and shopping malls are generally open from 10am–7pm Monday through Saturday. Art galleries are generally open on Sundays, but closed on Mondays and some of them require advance appointments. Boutique stores usually open at 10am, but may close from about 1pm to 3pm, and then reopen.

2 Paying and Bargaining

High end storefronts, department stores, and most boutiques do not entertain bargaining. But bargaining certainly is part of the experience of shopping in the *mercados*, or markets. How much to bargain for varies by market and by vendor. The best is to simply decide what the item is worth to you, and bargain accordingly.

3 Mercados

Mercados, or markets, are the traditional shopping venues for Mexicans, and they are still the most fascinating places to shop. Most neighborhoods have one or more *mercados*. Even if you are not shopping for anything, walking through a market is an excellent cultural experience.

4 Boutiques

During the day, Zona Rosa, with its many clothing boutiques, is

one of the most popular shopping districts in the city, especially with tourists. The chic, high-end fashion boutiques are primarily located along Avenida Presidente Masarik in Polanco and also along Altavista Street in San Ángel.

5 Art Galleries

Art galleries are found in many parts of Mexico City. Polanco is best known for its high-end galleries and design studios, while Zona Rosa offers a mix of fine art galleries and antique shops which also offer a huge variety of art. ☎ www.arte-mexico.com

6 Department Stores and Shopping Malls

There are two major department store chains in Mexico City – El Palacio de Hierro, an upscale department store chain, that specializes in designer clothing, and Liverpool which offers a wide range of mid-priced products and clothing. Antara Polanco is a fashionable shopping center. Centro Santa Fé, with more than 300 stores is the largest shopping center in Mexico. ☎ [El Palacio de Hierro: www.palaciodehierro.com.mx](http://ElPalacio.deHierro.com.mx) ☎ [Liverpool: www.liverpool.com.mx](http://Liverpool.com.mx) ☎ [Antara Polanco: Av Molière and Av Ejército Nacional, Col Polanco](http://AntaraPolanco.com) ☎ [Centro Santa Fé: Av Vasco de Quiroga](http://CentroSantaFe.com)

7 Museum Stores

Mexico City's museums offer some of the most interesting shops in the city. The merchandise reflects the museums' collections, and selections vary from CDs and books about performing arts at the Palacio de Bellas Artes (see pp22–3), to prints of Frida Kahlo's famous works at Museo Frida Kahlo (see p89).

8 Souvenirs

One of the best places to shop for Mexican handicrafts and souvenirs is at Mercado de Artesanías de la Ciudadela (see p53). Across from the Zócalo, along Monte de Piedad, many fine silver shops offer jewelry in a range of tempting prices.

9 Mexican Crafts

Mexican handicrafts can be found at Fonart (see p78), Museo de Artes Popular (see p70), Arte Mexicano Para el Mundo (see p72), and Mercado de Artesanías de la Ciudadela (see p53). Victor Artes Populares is for the serious collector. ☎ [Victor Artes Populares, 3rd floor, Av Madero 10 • 5512-1263 • 12:30–7pm Mon–Fri](http://VictorArtesPopulares.com)

10 Religious Art

The gift shop at the Villa de Guadalupe (see pp30–31) is a great place to find a huge collection of religious art.



Left **Many hotels have in-house tour agencies** Right **Comida**

TOP 10 Eating and Accommodations Tips

1 Restaurant Types

Mexican street food is found near every Metro station, in the markets, and on busy street corners. The small restaurants known as *taquerías* offer the same type of food as the street vendors, but generally with higher hygienic standards. *Fondas* are small cafés that offer *comida*, a fixed-menu lunch. *Cantinas* are popular in the evening as they serve food as well as liquor. Restaurants come in all sizes and price ranges, from modest cafés to chic five-star restaurants.

2 Breakfast

Desayuno (breakfast), is traditionally a large meal of *huevos* (eggs), served in a variety of ways. Most egg dishes come with a heavy spicy red or green sauce (*salsa*) and are usually served with refried beans and hot tortillas. *Chorizo* is a popular sausage. Lighter breakfasts feature *pan dulce*, a sweet bread, or *bolillos* which are a European-style roll.

3 Lunch

Comida, or lunch, is the large meal of the day. Lunch is a relaxed affair with friends, and can often last for hours. Many restaurants offer a daily *comida corrida* special, often featuring several courses and at an excellent price.

4 Dinner

Traditionally dinner was a very light meal of a sweet bread and hot chocolate. *Churros*, fried dough pastry coated with sugar, and hot chocolate remain a favorite evening snack. Many Mexicans now have a large evening meal and plenty of restaurants offer full dinner menus.

5 Tipping and Taxes

In restaurants it is traditional to tip 10–15 percent of the total amount, but some places include the tip in the total. A value added tax of 15 percent is added to services, goods, and hotels. In addition, hotels add a further 2 percent accommodations tax.

6 Hotel Taxis

Hotel taxis are the easiest and most convenient-to-use taxi service. They can be hired by the trip, by the hour, or for all day. The drivers associated with high-end hotels speak English and Spanish, are sometimes certified tourist guides, and can take you on personalized tours of your choice of city attractions. Negotiate the rates before boarding the taxi.

7 Hotel Tours

Hotel tours can be a fun way to see the city and meet other travelers, and they alleviate a lot of the transportation hassles and logistics

issues. On the other hand you are sometimes rushed around sights. Make sure that the guide speaks your language.

8 Hotel Fitness Facilities

If exercising is important for you, make sure you understand what facilities the hotel has when you make your reservations. Many of the high-end hotels either have their own facilities or can make arrangements for you to use other facilities close to the hotel.

9 Getting the Best Rate

Hotel rates are often negotiable, especially if you are flexible regarding your dates of stay. Many business hotels are busy during the week, but offer great discounts for weekend stays. Some hotels will give discounts if you pay in cash rather than by credit card.

10 Camping

There are two campgrounds located just outside Greater Mexico City. Both have facilities for RVs and tents. Pepe's (see p117) in Tepotzotlán, to the northwest of the city, offers camping in an in-town walled hacienda-like campground. To the north of the city is Teotihuacán Trailer Park offering camping facilities. ☎ *Teotihuacán Trailer Park, López Mateos 17, San Juan* • (594) 956-0313





Left **María Isabel Sheraton Center Hotel Gran Meliá** Right **Staircase, Embassy Suites**

TOP 10 Luxury Hotels

1 Hotel Four Seasons

This modern Neo-Classical hotel is known for its service, modern comfort, and close proximity to the Museo Nacional de Antropología. The hotel has a breathtaking eight-story central courtyard garden and fountain. ☎ *Paseo de la Reforma 500, Col Juárez* • Map G3 • 5230-1818 • www.fourseasons.com/mexico • \$\$\$\$

2 Camino Real Mexico City

This modern resort-hotel designed by Mexican architect Ricardo Legorreta is conveniently located just off Paseo de la Reforma. It has a collection of works by Tamayo, Siqueiros, and others. The hotel offers a modern gym, swimming pool, and sauna. ☎ *Mariano Escobedo 700 Col Nueva Anzures* • Map F2 • 5263-8888 • www.caminoreal.com/mexico • \$\$\$\$

3 María Isabel Sheraton

This is a classic high-rise hotel with an expansive marble lobby, friendly service, and an excellent location directly across from the Monumento a la Independencia with its golden angel. ☎ *Paseo de la Reforma 325 Col Cuauhtémoc* • Map J4 • 5242-5555 • www.starwoodhotels.com • \$\$\$\$

4 Marquis Reforma

Subtle and serene, this low-rise pink granite and glass luxury hotel is done up in Art Deco style and offers excellent service. It is located between Zona Rosa and Bosque de Chapultepec. ☎ *Paseo de la Reforma 465 Col Cuauhtémoc* • Map N5 • 5229-1200 • www.marquisreforma.com • \$\$\$\$

5 Nikko Mexico

Sleek and spacious, this 38-story hotel in Polanco offers inviting guestrooms with modern decor. Close to the museums in Bosque de Chapultepec, the hotel offers tennis courts, and a driving range for golfers. ☎ *Campos Elíseos 204 Col Polanco* • Map Q4 • 5283-8700 • www.hotelnikkomexico.com.mx • \$\$\$\$

6 W

The hotel has a contemporary design and the decor is tastefully elegant although accented in pulsating red. The hotel features the Away Spa and Fitness Center, and is within walking distance of Bosque de Chapultepec. ☎ *Campos Elíseos 252, Col Polanco* • 9138-1800 • www.whoels.com/mexicocity • \$\$\$\$

7 Hotel Gran Meliá

Elegant and modern, this beautiful hotel with its 20-story atrium lobby has spacious guestrooms

fitted with dark wood furnishings. ☎ *Paseo de la Reforma, 1 Mexico City* • Map M2 • 5128-5000 • www.granmeliamexicoreforma.com • \$\$\$

8 JW Marriott

This sophisticated high-rise hotel has spacious guestrooms in European style decor, warm colors, and high-speed Internet. Located close to Bosque de Chapultepec. ☎ *Andrés Bello 29, Col Polanco* • Map C3 • 5999-0000 • www.marriott.com.mx • \$\$\$\$

9 Presidente InterContinental

This 42-story high-rise overlooks Bosque de Chapultepec in trendy Polanco. Excellent restaurants offer a choice of New York steakhouse, fine Mexican cuisine, great Italian food, or casual French bistro dining. ☎ *Campos Elíseos 218, Col Polanco* • Map K4 • 5327-7700 • www.intercontinental.com • \$\$\$\$

10 Embassy Suites

This glass fronted high-rise hotel on Paseo de la Reforma offers tasteful design, excellent service, and exceptional amenities including a pool and a fitness center. ☎ *Paseo de la Reforma 69* • Map N1 • 5061-3000 • www.embassysuites.com • \$\$\$



Left **Hotel Catedral** Right **Best Western Hotel de Cortés**

10 Historic Hotels

1 Gran Hotel de la Ciudad de México

This 19th-century hotel, fronting the Zócalo, features a magnificent Art Nouveau lobby with a beautiful 1908 Tiffany stained-glass ceiling. It has an open courtyard, with a lovely, panoramic view from the elegant wrought-iron elevators. ☎ *Av 16 de Septiembre 82, Col Centro • Map P3 • 1083-7700 • www.granhotelciudaddemexico.com.mx • \$\$\$*

2 Hotel Majestic

The hotel is housed in a lovely Baroque building that fronts on the Zócalo. The lobby of the hotel features a red-tiled floor, lovely fountain, and hand-painted tiles from Pueblo. The rooftop Terraza Restaurant is an excellent place to watch the flag ceremony on the Zócalo. ☎ *Av Madero 73, Col Centro • Map Q3 • 5521-8600 • www.majestic.com.mx • Not all rooms have air conditioning • \$\$*

3 Best Western Hotel de Cortés

Dating back to the 17th century, this Baroque building was originally used by Augustine monks. With small, simple rooms, the hotel is located across from Alameda Central near the Museo Franz Mayer. ☎ *Av Hildago 85, Col Guerrero • Map N2 • 5518-2184 • www.boutiquehoteldecortes.com • No air conditioning • \$\$\$*

4 Imperial Hotel

This triangular-shaped, conveniently located, five-story building was constructed in 1904, and when it opened it was the tallest building in Mexico City. The lobby has an elegant marble floor, a crystal chandelier suspended from the ceiling, and a sweeping grand stairway. ☎ *Paseo de la Reforma 64, Col Juárez • Map L3 • 5705-4911 • www.hotelimperial.com.mx • \$\$\$*

5 Holiday Inn Zócalo

This historic colonial building located across from the Zócalo houses a thoroughly modern Holiday Inn with a glass front lobby. Comfortable guestrooms are decorated in a pleasant colonial style. ☎ *Av 5 de Mayo 61, Col Centro • Map Q2 • 5130-5130 • www.hotelescortes.com • \$\$*

6 Geneve Calinda

This elegant 1906 colonial hotel with classical European styling is decorated with antique furnishings and fine art. The attached Sanborns Restaurant is in a historic salon with stained-glass decor. ☎ *Londres 130, Col Juárez • Map H3 • 5080-0800 • www.hotelgeneve.com.mx • \$*

7 Tulip Inn Ritz

Built in 1930 on one of the city's most historic streets, Madero, the hotel's rooms are

smallish but clean and inviting. There is Internet available in the lobby and the staff are very friendly and helpful. ☎ *Madero 30, Col Centro • Map P2 • 5130-0169 • www.tulipinnritzmexico.com • No air conditioning • \$\$*

8 Hotel Gillow

Pleasant small hotel with a lovely century-old marble, brass, and dark wood lobby. The sixth floor rooms have private balconies. ☎ *Isabel la Católica 17, Col Centro • Map P2 • 5518-1440 • www.hotelgillow.com • No air conditioning • \$*

9 Hotel María Cristina

A small hotel in a charming rose-colored four-story colonial building close to the UK Embassy. The garden offers a retreat from the bustle of the city. ☎ *Río Lerma 31, Col Cuauhtémoc • Map J3 • 5703-1212 • www.hotelmariacristina.com.mx • Air conditioning only in some rooms • \$*

10 Hotel Catedral

This small hotel with 116 rooms has a lovely lobby with gleaming marble floors, dark woodwork, and arched windows. Two terraces on the seventh floor, with chairs and tables, provide great views of the city. ☎ *Donceles 95, Col Centro • Map Q2 • 5518-5232 • www.hotelcatedral.com • No air conditioning • \$*

Price Categories

For a standard, double room per night (with breakfast if included), taxes, and extra charges.	\$ under 1000 pesos
	\$ 1000–1500 pesos
	\$ 1500–2000 pesos
	\$ 2000–2500 pesos
	\$ over 2500 pesos

Left **Hotel Suites Amberes** Right **Hotel Marco Polo**

TOP 10 Boutique Hotels and Inns

1 Casa González

This charming, colonial-style small inn, with 22 guestrooms and a lovely landscaped courtyard, is located in a residential area near the UK and US embassies. Each room is unique, and some have their own balcony or terrace. ☎ *Río Sena 69, Col Cuauhtémoc* • Map J3 • 5514-3302 • No air conditioning • \$

2 Hotel Hábita

Located in trendy Polanco, the ultra-modern design makes this 36-room boutique hotel a standout. Guestrooms offer an elegantly minimalist white and metal decor, marble baths, and super comfortable beds. ☎ *Av Presidente Masarik 201, Col Polanco* • Map D2 • 5282-3100 • www.hotelhabita.com • \$\$\$\$

3 Casa Vieja

This luxurious all-suites boutique hotel is housed in a former late 19th-century mansion in an exclusive section of Polanco. The two-story hacienda is elegantly charming, with tiled courtyard and common areas, colored stucco walls, and lavishly decorated with Mexican ceramics, paintings, and folk art. The suites are spacious with colorful decor. ☎ *Eugenio Sue 45, Col Polanco* • Map D2 • 5282-0067 • www.casavieja.com • \$\$\$\$

4 Hotel Marco Polo

This modern small hotel on the edge of Zona Rosa has sixty carpeted spacious guestrooms, furnished with modern decor. There is a piano bar on the lobby level. ☎ *Amberes 27, Col Juárez* • Map J4 • 5080-1445, 5080-0063 • www.marcopolo.com.mx • \$

5 Suites Coyoacán

This small colonial hotel provides apartment-style accommodations in a residential area. The inn feels much like a personal residence, and the nine guestrooms are attractive suites with kitchens. Weekly and monthly rates are available. ☎ *Av Coyacán 1909, Col Del Valle* • Map V1 • 5534-4013 • www.suitescoyoacan.com • No air conditioning • \$\$

6 NH Centro Histórico

This is a small five-story boutique hotel with minimalist decor and pleasant common areas. The rooms are small and comfortable with wood floors. Many rooms offer city views and there is a rooftop restaurant. ☎ *Calle Palma 42, Centro* • Map Q2 • 5130-1850 • www.nh-hotels.com • \$\$

7 Hotel Emporium

This elegant boutique hotel presents European charm in a stunning early 20th-century building. The lobby is finished in

pink marble with large mirrors and brass detailing. All guestrooms are tastefully decorated with contemporary colors and have modern baths with Jacuzzis. ☎ *Av Paseo de la Reforma 124, Col Juárez* • Map L3 • 5566-7766 • www.hotelesemporio.com • \$\$\$

8 Hotel Suites Amberes

Charming and modern, the suites of this small apartment-style boutique hotel feature full kitchens and a separate alcove. Guests are also served complimentary Mexican breakfast. ☎ *Amberes 64, Col Juárez* • Map J4 • 5533-1306 • www.suitesamberes.com.mx • \$\$

9 Hippodrome Hotel

Contemporary boutique charm joins historic grandeur in this Art Deco building. The rooms are decorated in neutral colors with wood furnishings, leather, and Mexican textiles. ☎ *Av Mexico 188, Col Condesa* • Map H5 • 5212-2110 • www.thehippodromehotel.com • \$\$\$\$

10 Hotel Polanco

This five-story hotel offers rooms with wood furniture and colorful fabrics. The lobby has marble floors, stained-glass ceiling, and relaxing leather couches. ☎ *Edgar Allan Poe 8, Col Polanco* • 5280-8082 • www.hotelpolanco.com • \$\$\$





Price Categories

For a standard,	\$	under 1000 pesos
double room per	\$	1000–1500 pesos
night (with breakfast	\$	1500–2000 pesos
if included), taxes,	\$	2000–2500 pesos
and extra charges.	\$	over 2500 pesos

Left Plaza Florencia Right Royal Hotel Zona Rosa

TOP 10 Mid-Range Hotels

 Galería Plaza

Located in Zona Rosa this 11-story hotel is a favorite with business travelers. The spacious and bright guestrooms are done up in a modern style using neutral colors.

📍 **Hamburgo 195 Col Juárez • Map G3 • 5230-1717 • www.brisas.com.mx**

• \$\$\$

📍 *Hamburgo 195 Col*
Juárez • Map G3 • 5230-
1717 • www.brisas.com.mx
• \$\$\$

Sevilla Palace

2 This sleek 23-story high-rise hotel comes with modern rooms and a dramatic central atrium lobby with a welcoming sitting area. The excellent amenities include a fitness center, a rooftop pool, a hot tub, and a lounge. 📍 *Av Paseo de la Reforma 105, Col Tabacalera*
• Map L3 • 5705-2800
• www.sevillapalace.com.
mx • \$\$\$

Reforma 105, Col Tabacalera
• Map L3 • 5705-2800
• www.sevillapalace.com.mx • \$\$\$

**3 Sheraton Centro
Histórico Hotel
and Convention
Center**

Conveniently located and thoroughly modern, this dramatic 24-story high-rise offers spacious guestrooms with plush furnishings, marble baths, and high-speed Internet. Full business services for meetings, conferences, and conventions are available. Other amenities offered include a fitness center and an indoor swimming pool. 📍 *Av Juárez 70, Col Centro*

- *Map N2 • 5130-5300*
- *www.sheratonmexico.com • \$\$\$*

swimming pool. ☎ Av Juárez 70, Col Centro
• Map N2 • 5130-5300
• www.sheratonmexico.com • \$\$\$

4 Royal Hotel Zona Rosa

This small but classic Zona Rosa hotel has spacious rooms, with large baths. The rooms are tastefully decorated with neutral colors. The rooftop pool and solarium offer stunning views of the city. 📍 *Amberes 78, Col Juárez • Map J4 • 9149-3000 • www.hotelroyalzar.com • \$\$\$*

Col Juárez • Map J4
• 9149-3000 • www.hotelroyalzr.com • \$\$\$

NH Mexico City

5 This contemporary Zona Rosa high-rise hotel has a sleek and modern lobby with marble floors and sitting areas. Large guestrooms are decorated in dark neutral colors with hardwood floors and matching wooden furniture.

📍 *Liverpool 155, Col Juárez*
• *Map H3 • 5228-9928*
• *www.nh-hotels.com*
• *\$\$\$*

📍 *Liverpool 155, Col Juárez*
 • *Map H3 • 5228-9928*
 • *www.nh-hotels.com*
 • *\$\$\$*

Plaza Florencia

B This narrow stone and glass tower in Zona Rosa has carpeted guestrooms with wood furnishings and neutral fabrics.  *Florencia 61, Col Juárez • Map H3 • 5242-4700 • www.plazaflorencia.com.mx • \$\$\$*

fabrics. ☎ **Florencia 61, Col Juárez • Map H3 • 5242-4700 • www.plazaflorencia.com.mx • \$\$\$**

 Hotel Royal Plaza

7 This pleasant hotel's rooms are spacious and attractive, with carpeting, king size beds, and bright print accent fabrics. Suites are also available.

☎ *Parroquia 1056, Col Santa Cruz Atovac • 5061-1000*

☎ Parroquia1056, Col Santa Cruz Atovac • 5061-1000

• www.hotelroyalplaza.com.mx • \$\$

 Century Hotel

8 Close to the gay nightlife section of Zona Rosa, this hotel offers comfortable guestrooms with private balconies, neutral color schemes, and marble baths with Roman tubs. The lovely lobby has marble floors, curved walls and seating areas decorated in golden tones. 📍 *Liverpool 152, Col Juárez • Map H3 • 5726-9911 • www.century.com.mx • \$*

golden tones. ☎ *Liverpool*
152, Col Juárez • Map H3
• 5726-9911 • [www.
century.com.mx](http://www.century.com.mx) • \$\$

9 Fiesta Inn Centro Histórico

This is a modern, small hotel with 140 guestrooms. Room furnishings come in neutral color tones. There is a small gym and a modern shopping mall on the first floor. 📍 Av Juárez 76, Col Centro

- Map N2 • 5130-2900
- www.fiestainn.com • \$\$

the first floor. 📍 Av Juárez
76, Col Centro
• Map N2 • 5130-2900
• www.fiestajinn.com • \$\$

 Hotel Bristol

10 Located in a quiet neighborhood behind the US and UK embassies, the hotel is a favorite with business and pleasure travelers. Attractive guestrooms, a convenient setting, and friendly staff make it a pleasant place to stay. The large lobby has a pleasant sitting area.

📍 *Plaza Necaxa 17, Col Cuauhtémoc • Map K3 • 5533-6060 • www.hotelbristol.com.mx • \$*

☎ Plaza Necaxa 17, Col.
Cuauhtémoc • Map K3
• 5533-6060 • www.hotelbristol.com.mx • \$



Left Foyer, Mexico City Hostel Right Hotel Palace

TOP 10 Budget Hotels

1 Hotel Palace

This conveniently located hotel offers friendly service, tours to popular attractions, clean guestrooms decorated in blue tones, and an onsite restaurant. The Turibus stop is close by and the hotel is situated between Paseo de la Reforma and the Monumento a la Revolución. ☎ *Ignacio Ramírez 7, Col Tabacalera* • Map L2 • 5566-2400 • No air conditioning • \$

2 Mexico City Hostel

This cheery hostel in an attractive colonial building has a bilingual staff, Internet service, and a small café in the pretty lobby. Dormitory and private rooms are available, as are laundry services and lockers. ☎ *República de Brasil 8, Col Centro* • Map Q1 • 5512-3666 • www.mexicocityhostel.com • No air conditioning or private bathrooms • \$

3 Hostal Moneda

This hostel, just east of Zócalo, is popular with backpackers and includes airport pickup, breakfast buffet, Internet, and a pleasant rooftop terrace with hammocks. A basic room features bunk and in-room locker. ☎ *Moneda 8, Col Centro* • Map Q2 • 5522-5803 • www.hostalmoneda.com.mx • Air conditioning and private bathrooms only in some rooms • \$

4 Casa de los Amigos

This simple Quaker-run guest house caters to travelers who share their values of international peace and understanding. The place has shared dormitory-style rooms for men and women and a few small double rooms, with a minimum stay for four nights. ☎ *Ignacio Mariscal 132, Col Tabacalera* • Map L2 • 5705-0521 • www.casadelosamigos.org • Air conditioning and private bathrooms only in some rooms • \$

5 Hostel Mundo Joven Catedral

Affiliated to Hostelling International, this hostel has an attractive lobby with a full service café, friendly bilingual staff, and offers tours. Internet café, lockers, a roof-top terrace, and a complimentary breakfast are attractions. ☎ *República de Guatemala 4, Col Centro* • Map R2 • 5518-1726 • www.hostelcatedral.com • No air conditioning. Private bathrooms only in some rooms • \$

6 Mayaland

This excellent budget hotel has pleasant and spotlessly clean small rooms, friendly staff, Internet access in the lobby, and a good restaurant. ☎ *Antonio Caso 23, Col Tabacalera* • Map K2 • 5566-6066 • www.hotelmayaland.com.mx • No air conditioning • \$

7 Posada Viena

This Mexican-style hotel has cozy rooms with large windows and ceiling fans. It also features an Argentine restaurant and wireless Internet in the public areas. ☎ *Marsella 28, Col Juárez* • Map K4 • 5592-7312 • www.posadavienahotel.com • Fourth night free. No air conditioning • \$

8 Hotel Finisterre

This mid-rise hotel is clean and modern with comfortable guestrooms and a large, pleasant lobby. ☎ *Calzada de Tlalpan 2043, Col Parque de San Andrés* • 5689-9544 • www.hotelfinisterre.com.mx • \$

9 Hotel Corinto

This mid-size 10-story hotel offers comfortable guestrooms in neutral colors with modern furnishings. There is a swimming pool on the roof and an on-site restaurant. ☎ *Ignacio L. Vallarta 24, Col Tabacalera* • Map L2 • 5566-9711 • www.corinto.com.mx • \$

10 Hotel Metropol

This modern hotel offers spotlessly clean guestrooms pleasantly decorated in neutral colors. There is an onsite restaurant serving Mexican entrées. ☎ *Luis Moya 39, Col Centro* • Map N3 • 1085-0830, 01-800-022-3099 • www.hotelmopol.com.mx • No air conditioning • \$





Left **Hotel Condesa df** Right **Hotel La Casona**

Price Categories

For a standard, double room per night (with breakfast if included), taxes, and extra charges.	\$ under 1000 pesos
	\$ 1000–1500 pesos
	\$ 1500–2000 pesos
	\$ 2000–2500 pesos
	\$ over 2500 pesos

For 10 Staying Around the City

1 Hotel Condesa df

Chic, modern, and casual, this boutique hotel is furnished in a classical yet contemporary style. The guestrooms are luxurious, simple, and tasteful with high ceilings and colorful handwoven rugs. The shady inner courtyard reminds you of an old hacienda, yet it is completely modern in ambience. ☎ *Av Veracruz 102, Col Condesa • Map F4 • 5241-2600 • www.condesadf.com • \$\$\$\$*

2 Hotel La Casona

With elegantly furnished rooms, this small and cozy, European-style hotel is housed in a former mansion with a stunning courtyard. The service is personal with a focus on comfort, privacy, and refined luxury. ☎ *Durango 280, Col Roma • Map G4 • 5286-3001 • www.hotellacasona.com.mx • \$\$\$*

3 Hotel Parque Ensenada

This attractive multi-story hotel is located in the Roma area. The guestrooms are clean, comfortably-sized, and come with carpeting and an in-room safe. The hotel has a business center, on-site restaurant, and a parking space. ☎ *Av Álvaro Obregón 13, Col Roma • Map L5 • 5208-0052, 01-800-908-9600 • www.hotelensenada.com.mx • Extra charge for rooms with air conditioning • \$*

4 Radisson Paraíso Perisur Hotel

This gleaming modern high-rise has a stunning and expansive atrium lobby with a fine Mexican restaurant. The rooms are spacious with large windows, contemporary furnishings, blue tone carpeting, well-lit desks, and in-room safes. ☎ *Cúspide 53, Col Parques del Pedregal • 5927-5959 • www.radisson.com • \$\$\$\$*

5 Casa de la Condesa

The rooms are clean with basic furnishings, and some of the rooms on the top floor face the park and have small balconies. Suites have larger rooms, small kitchenettes with microwave, and a small refrigerator. It is located in Roma near restaurants and cafés. ☎ *Orizaba 16, Col Roma • Map K6 • 5574-3186 • www.extendedstaymexico.com • \$\$*

6 Hotel Roosevelt

This small modern hotel with 74 rooms is spotlessly clean, and the bilingual front desk staff are very helpful. The guestrooms are pleasant and comfortable with a small safe. The hotel is located close to Condesa and the Metro Station. ☎ *Insurgentes Sur 287, Col Condesa • Map H5 • 5208-3606 • www.hotelroosevelt.com.mx • Air conditioning only in some rooms • \$*

7 Hilton Aeropuerto

This mid-sized modern hotel is located over the international terminal but it has excellent soundproofing. Some of the rooms look out over the airport runways. ☎ *Benito Juárez International Airport • Map C2 • 5133-0505 • www.hilton.com • \$\$\$*

8 Crowne Plaza Hotel de Mexico

This high-rise hotel near the World Trade Center has a dramatic two-story lobby with wood details and cozy seating areas. The rooms are large and have Jacuzzi tubs. ☎ *Dakota 95, Col Nápoles • 1164-1164 • www.crowneplaza.com • \$\$\$*

9 Camino Real Aeropuerto

A high-rise hotel with large, attractive rooms. The business center is open 24 hours daily. ☎ *Puerto México 80, Col Peñón de los Baños • Map C2 • 3003-0033 • www.caminoreal.com.mx • \$\$\$\$*

10 Pepe's

Open year-round this pleasant RV park and campground is the one closest to Mexico City and suitable for large rigs. Affiliation to a major travel agency helps in logistics support. ☎ *Eva Samano de López Mateos 62, Barrio San Martín, Tepotzotlán • 5876-1841 • www.tepotzotlanmexico.com.mx/rvparkpepes • \$*



Unless otherwise stated, all hotels have en-suite bathrooms and air conditioning



General Index

A

Acapulco 59, 63
 Acatitlán 41
 accommodations *see*
 hotels
 acrobat, Tlatilco 8
Adoration of the Kings 13
 air travel 103, 106
 airport 103
 Alameda Central 20
 Altar del Perdón 12, 13
 Altar de los Reyes 13
 Antigua Basílica de
 Guadalupe 30
 Dr. Álar 91
 Antiguo Colegio de San
 Ildefonso 41, 44, 50, 68
 Antiguo Palacio del
 Arzobispado 57
Apotheosis of Peace 27
 architecture 44
 Arena Coliseo 56
 Arena México 56
 Arrieta, Pedro de 30
 art galleries 110
 Art Deco 6, 20, 21, 44, 56,
 68, 97
 Arte Mexicano para el
 Mundo 72
Assumption of the Virgin 13
 Dr. ATL 27
 Atlanteans 62
 attire 107
 Au Pied de Cochon 87
 Auditorio Nacional 56, 57
 Avenida Insurgentes 98
 Avenida Presidente
 Masarik 86
 Avenue of the Dead 32,
 34, 35
 Aztec Hall 9, **10–11**, 85

B

Balbás, Jerónimo de 13
 ballet, *see* Mexican Ballet,
 Folkloric Ballet
 Ballet Folklórico de México
 21, 56
 banking 109
 Bar León 56
 Bar la Ópera 56, 73
 Barragán, Luis 45
 bars 56

baseball 59
 basílicas *see* churches
 basketball 59
 Battle of Puebla 61
 Bazar de Sábado 90
 Bellini 56, 98, 99
 Benito Juárez Museo 15
 bird watching 58
Birth of Venus 20
 Bistolfi, Leonardo 20
 Bistrot Mosaico 99
 Boari, Adamo 20, 44
 boating 59
 Bolsa Mexicana de Valores
 (BMV) 45, 77
 Bosque de Chapultepec 7,
 22–3, 38, 43, 46, 58, 82,
 83, 84, 85
 Botánico Jardín (Palacio
 Nacional) 47
 boxing 59
 Bravo, Manuel 86
Broken Spine, The 92
 budget travel 106
Burghers of Calais 91
 Burnt Palace 62
 bullfighting 59
 buses 103, 104

C

Cabrera, Miguel 7, 13, 26,
 31, 49, 69
 Café Lutece 87
 Café Milano 79
 Café del Palacio 20
 Café El Parnaso 93
 Café el Péndulo 79
 Café Tacuba 73
 cafés *see* restaurants
 and cafés
 Calles, Plutarco Elías
 67, 75
 Camarena, González 51
 camping 111
 Cano Manilla, Ramón 27
 Cantina la Coyoacana 93
 cantinas 56
 Capilla del Cerrito 31
 Capilla de Nuestra Señora
 de los Dolores 13
 Capilla del Pocito 31
 Capilla de San Felipe de
 Jesús 13

Capilla de San José 12
 car rental 103, 104
 Cárdenas, Lázaro 23, 25,
 75, 82
 Carlota 25, 63
 Carranza, Venustiano 75,
 77
 Carrillón 31
 Cartier 86
 Casa de los Azulejos 44,
 50, 69, 71
 Casa de la Cultura Jesús
 Reyes Heróles 91
 Casa de los Espejos 25,
 85
 Casa Lamm 98
 Casa de la Primera
 Imprenta de América
 40, 70
 Casas, Bartolomé de las
 76
 Casino Español 73
 Castillo de Chapultepec
 22, **24–5**, 39, 40, 43, 50,
 83, 85
 Catedral Metropolitana 6,
 12–13, 44, 48, 67
 cathedrals *see* churches
 Causeway of the Empress
 see Paseo de la Reforma
 Cementeros de Cruz Azul
 98
 Centro Cultural Ollin Yoliztli
 56, 57
 Centro Cultural Telmex 57
 Centro Histórico **66–73**
 restaurants and cafés 73
 shopping 72
 Centro Nacional de las
 Artes 57
 Chacmool Carving 17
 Chalchiuhtlicue 8, 35
 Champs-Elysees 40, 74
 Chapulín 11
 Chapultepec and Polanco
 82–7
 restaurants and cafés 87
 shopping 86
 Chapultepec Hill 25,
 41
 Charlot, Jean 51
 charrerías 59
 children 102

Church of Santa Catarina 91
 Church of Santiago 95
 churches **48-9** *see also*
 individual entries
 Churrigueresque 13, 44, 48
 Cielo Rojo 79
 cinema 57
 Ciudadela 33
 classical music 56
 Claudelle, Camille 91
 Clausell, Joaquín 70
 cliff divers 59
 climate 105
 climbing 58, 59
Cloud, The 27
 clubs 56
 Cluny 93
 Coatlicue 10, 11
 Columbus, Christopher 61, 76
 Condesa 98
 Contramar 99
 Contreras, Jesús F. 27
 Convent of Santo Domingo 41
 Coppedé, Mariano 69
 Cordier, Carlos 76
 Correa, Juan de 31, 69
 Cortés, Hernán 10, 11, 14, 16, 38, 39, 40, 43, 62, 67, 88, 90
 Covarrubias, Luis 10
 Coyoacán and San Ángel **88-93**
 restaurants and cafés 93
 Coyolxauhqui 10, 11, 16, 43
Creation, The 92
 crime 105, 108
 Cuauhtémoc 26, 60, 76
 Cuauhticalli of Moctezuma I 11
 Cuernavaca 62
 Cuevas, José Antonio 44
 Cuevas, José Luis 70, 83
 currency exchange 109
 Customs Tax Collectors 41

D

dance venues 56, 57
Day of the Dead 50
 Degas, Edgar 91
 Deza, Diego de 76
 Díaz, Juan José 45

Díaz, Porfirio 14, 25, 27, 39, 41, 44, 75, 76, 83
 Diego, Juan 7, 30, 31, 48, 95
 dinner shows 56
 discounts 106
 DKNY 86
 Don Asado 99
Don Juan Antonio 69
Dream of a Sunday Afternoon in the Alameda Central 51, 70, 92
 driving 103, 104
 Dulcería de Celaya 72

E

Eagle Knights 17
 Easter 61
 Echave, Baltazar de 97
 Edificio Basurto 97
 El Ángel 76
 El Antiguo Convento Churubusco 89
El Arquitecto 43
 El Bar Mata 56
 El Bazar de Sábado Restaurant 90, 93
El Caballito 26, 27, 75, 77
El Hombre Contralor del Universo 51, 92
 embassies and consulates 108
 emergencies 108
 Emperor Maximilian I 25, 39, 63, 67, 74, 76, 83
 Emperor Moctezuma II 39
 entertainment and performing arts **56-7**
 Entre Vero 93
Epic of the Mexican People 6, 14, 51, 67, 92
 Escandón, Antonio 76
 Estadio Azteca 56, 59
 Estudio Azul 98
Eternal Spring, The 91
 Ethnography Halls 9
Eve 91
 Ex-Convento e Iglesia del Carmen 49
 excursions **62-3**

F

Felguérez, Manuel 83
 festivals **60-61**
 Finance Secretariat 69
 Folkloric Ballet 56
 Fonart 78
 Fonda el Refugio 79
 Fonda San Ángel 93
 food and drink **54-5**
 Fountain of Coyoacán 89
 Fountain of the Water Jugs 97
 Frattina 86
 Freedom Bell 61
 Fuente de la Diana Cazadora 77
 Fuente de Tláloc 85
 Fuster, Alberto 27

G

Galería Arvil 78
 Galería de Historia 24
 Galería Enrique Guerrero 86
 Galería Enrique Jiménez Maren 78
 Galería Juan Martín 86
 Galería Lopez Quiroga 86
 Galería Oscar Román 86
 Gálvez, Bernardo de 25
 Gante, Pedro de 76
 gardens *see* parks and gardens
 Gaudí 79
 gay and lesbian venues 57
 Giandolce 87
 Gil, Carmen Carrillo 91
 Ginocchio Galería 86
 golf 59
 Greater Mexico City **94-9**
 restaurants and cafés 99
 Gulf Coast Hall 9
 Gunten, Roger Von 86
 Guzman, Santo Domingo de 48

H

Hacienda de los Morales 87
 hang-gliding 58
 Headdress of Quetzal Feathers 10
 health 104, 107
 Helados Siberia 91, 93



- Helguera, Francisco
Eppens 50, 51
Hemiciclo a Juárez 71
Heredia, Guillermo de 71
Herrán, Saturnino 27
Hevart's Galería de
Arte 78
Hidalgo y Costilla, Miguel
14, 15, 38, 39
High Convent of Our
Holy Father St. Francis
of Mexico 48
hiking 58
Hipódromo de las
Américas 59
historic sites **40-41**
history **38-9**
horse racing 59
horse riding 58
hospitals 108
Hot-Air Balloon, The 27
hot-air ballooning 58
hotels 112-7
boutique hotels 114
budget hotels 116
discounts 106
historic hotels 113
luxury hotels 112
mid-range hotels 115
staying around Mexico
City 117
House of Tiles *see* Casa
de los Azulejos
Huitzilopochili 10, 11,
38, 95
- I**
Iglesia y Ex-Convento de
San Francisco 48
Iglesia y Hospital de
Jesús Nazareno 40
Iglesia de la Profesa 49
Iglesia de San Agustín
de las Cuevas 96
Iglesia de San Francisco
de Javier 49
Iglesia de San Juan
Bautista 89, 91
Iglesia de Santa Prisca
62
immigration 103
Infotour 102
insurance 102
Internet 109
Italianni's 79
- Ituarte, Manuel M. 90
Iturbe, Don Augustin de 13
Izaguirre, Leandro 26, 90
Izote 87
Iztaccíhuatl 59, 63
Iztapalapa 60
- J**
Jaguar Mural 33, 34
Jaguar Palace 34
Jardín Borda 63
Jardín de la Bombilla 46
Jardín Botánico 46
Jardín Botánico (UNAM)
47
Jardín del Centenario
47, 52
Jardín de la Solidaridad 47
Jardín de la Tercera
Edad 46
Jiménez, Francisco 76
jogging 58
Juárez, Benito 39, 61, 71
Juárez, Juan Rodríguez 13,
49
- K**
Kahlo, Frida 42, 83, 88, 89,
90, 92, 95
The Kiss 91
Konditori 77, 79
Kooning, William de 83
- L**
La Buena Tierra 97, 99
La Casa de la
Sirenas 73
La Europa 72
La Feria de Chapultepec
23, 57
La Hormiga 23
La Katharsis 51
La Malinche 39, 90
*La Marcha de la
Humanidad* 50
La Parroquia 63
La Quebrada 42
Laboratorio Arte Alameda
71
lakes *see* Bosque de
Chapultepec
language 107
Las Dos Fridas 83, 92
Lazzaroni 71
Leal, Fernando 31
Legorreta, Ricardo 85
- Les Moustaches 79
Libería Gandhi 72
Lienzo Charro 59
Litoral 99
Little Hill 31
Los Bisquets Obregón 16
Los Danzantes 73, 91, 93
Los Girasoles 26, 73
Los Niños Héroes 38
Los Pinos 22
Lotería Nacional 44
Lozano, Manuel Rodríguez
51
Lucha libre 56, 59
- M**
Madero, Francisco I.
39, 75
magazines 102
Magdalena River 58, 96
Malgré Tout 27
Mamá Rosa's 99
Manhattan Deli 79
Manilla, Ramón Cano 27
maps 102
Marchena, Juan Pérez de
76
mariachi 28, 57, 60
marimba 28
markets **52-3**, 110
Bazar de Sábado 53, 90,
93
Jardín de Arte 53
Mercado de Artesanías
de la Ciudadela 53, 71
Mercado de Coyoacán
52, 91
Mercado Insurgentes
52, 77, 78
Mercado Jamaica 52
Mercado de la Merced
52
Mercado San Juan 53,
71
Mercado Sonora 52
Mercado Xochitl 52
Marotti, Geza 20
Matisse 99
Maya Hall 9
Mayan 9, 42, 97
Mayer, Franz 42
Mendiola, Vicente 77
Mendoza, Antonio de 40
mercados see markets
Meridien 22, 87

- Mesoamerica 32, 35, 62
 Mesón del Cid 56
 metro 103, 104
 metrobús 104
 Metropolitana Sacarium 13
 Mexica Hall
 see Aztec Hall
 Mexican Ballet 56
 Mexican National Art 92
 Mexican Revolution 24, 39, 41, 43, 46, 67, 77
 Mexican Stock Exchange
 see Bolsa Mexicana de Valores
 Mexico City Virtual Guide 102
 Military Academy 25
 Mochilazo 58
 Moctezuma I 11
 Moctezuma II 14, 38, 39, 40, 67
 Monarch Butterfly Reserve 63
 Monolith of Coyolxauhqui 16
 Montenegro, Roberto 51
 Monumento de Colón 76
 Monumento a Cuauhtémoc 76
 Monumento a la Independencia 76
 Monumento a los Niños Heroes 23, 25, 84
 Monumento a la Revolución 75, 77
 mountain biking 58
 mountains
 Iztaccíhuatl 63
 La Malinche 59, 63
 Popocatepetl 63
 murals 6, 8, 33, 34, **50–51**, 62, 89
 Murillo, Gerardo *see* Dr. ATL
 Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil 43, 91
 Museo de Arte
 Moderno 42, 51, 83, 85
 Museo de Arte Popular 70
 Museo de la Basílica de Guadalupe 31
 Museo del Caracol 24, 85
 Museo de la Caricatura 70
 Museo del Carmen 90
 Museo Casa Barragán 45
 Museo Casa de Carranza 77
 Museo Casa Estudio Diego Rivera y Frida Kahlo 90
 Museo de la Charrería 70
 Museo de la Ciudad de México y Estudio de Joaquín Clausell 70
 Museo Diego Rivera Anahuacalli 97
 Museo Dolores Olmedo 42, 92, 94, 95
 Museo del Ejército 70
 Museo Franz Mayer 42, 68
 Museo Frida Kahlo 42, 89, 91
 Museo de Historia Natural 84
 Museo Interactivo de Economía 70
 Museo José Luis Cuevas 70
 Museo Leon Trotsky 89, 91
 Museo Mural Diego Rivera 70, 92
 Museo Nacional de la Acuarela 90
 Museo Nacional de Antropología 6, **8–9**, 22, 41, 42, 83, 84, 85
 Museo Nacional de Arquitectura 20, 21
 Museo Nacional de Arte 7, **26–7**, 42, 69
 Museo Nacional de Historia 22, 43, 50, 83, 84, 85
 Museo Nacional de la Revolución 75, 77
 Museo Nacional de San Carlos 75, 77
 Museo Nacional del Virreinato 62
 Museo del Niño 57
 Museo Rufino Tamayo 43, 83
 Museo SHCP 69
 Museo Soumaya 91
 Museo Tecnológico de la CFE 23
 Museo del Templo Mayor 16
 museums 6, 7, 8, **42–3**, 67
 see also individual entries
 Music
 classical music 56
 mariachi 28, 57, 60
 marimba 28
 Music venues 57

N
Nacimiento de la Virgen 69
 Nacional Monte de Piedad 72
 National Observatory 24
 National Opera 56
 National Symphony Orchestra 56
 Nativitas 28, 29
 Neo-Gothic 63
 Nevado de Toluca 59
 newspapers 102
 Noreña, Miguel 76
 Northern Cultures Hall 9
 Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe 30
Nueva Democracia 51

O
 Oaxaca Hall 9
 Obregón, Álvaro 39, 41, 46, 92
 Obsidian Monkey Vessel 10
 Ocelotl-Cuauhxicalli 11
Offering, The 27
 O'Gorman, Juan 42, 45, 50, 51, 90
 Olaguibel, John 77
 Olmec 9
 Olympic Stadium 50
 Omteotl 11
Omniciencia 50
 organ grinders 68
 Orozco, José Clemente 21, 41, 42, 43, 50, 51, 86, 91
 Our Lady of Guadalupe
 see Virgin of Guadalupe
 outdoor activities and sports **58–9**

P
 Paalen, Wolfgang 91
 Palace of Inquisition 41
 Palace of Tēmantitla 33



- Palacio de Bellas Artes 6,
20–21, 41, 44, 47, 51,
56, 57, 68, 69, 72, 92
- Palacio de
Comunicaciones 26
- Palacio de Cortés 62
- Palacio de los Deportes 59
- Palacio de Minería 44
- Palacio Nacional 6 **14–15**,
40, 51, 67, 92
- Palacio Postal 69, 71
- Papalote Museo del
Niño 23, 85
- parks and gardens
6, **46–7** *see also*
individual entries
- Parque Alameda
Central 40, 46, 68
- Parque Ecológico de
Xochimilco 29, 46, 96
- Parque Hundido 47, 58, 98
- Parque Lincoln 47
- Parque México 46, 58, 97
- Parque Nacional Ajusco 58
- Parque Nacional Desierto
de los Leones 47, 58, 96
- Parque Nacional los
Dinamos 58, 96
- Parque Nacional
Iztaccíhuatl-Popocatepetl
63
- Parroquia de
Capuchinas 31
- Parroquia de Indios 31
- Parroquia de San
Bernardino de Siena 49
- Pasaje Polanco 86
- Paseo de Cortés 63
- Paseo de la Reforma and
Zona Rosa **74–9**
restaurants and cafés 79
shopping 78
- Pastelería Ideal 72
- Pastor Velazquez 90
- Patino, Dolores Olmedo
92, 95
- Patio of the Pillars 34
- pedicab 28
- Perfumes Y Esencias
Fraiche 72
- Peseros 104
- pharmacies 108
- phonecards 109
- photography 107
- Pirámide de Cuicuilco 41
- Plaza Ciudadela 71
- Plaza de la Constitución
see Zócalo
- Plaza de las Tres Culturas
60, 95
- Plaza del Ángel 77, 78
- Plaza del Carmen 53
- Plaza Garibaldi 57
- Plaza Hidalgo 89, 91
- Plaza Manuel Tolsá 69
- Plaza of the Moon 34
- Plaza de la Santa
Veracruz 47
- Plaza Santo Domingo 41,
71
- Plaza de Toros Mexico 98
- police 108
- Polyforum Siqueiros 50, 98
- Popocatepetl 63
- Portal de los Evangelistas
41
- Pre-Classic Central Mexico
Hall 8
- public holidays 61
- Puebla 63
- Puro Corazón 73
- Pyramid of the Moon 32,
33, 34, 35
- Pyramid of the Sun 32, 35
- Pyramid of
Tlahuizcalpantecuhtli 62
- Q**
- Querol, Augustin 20
- Quetzalcoatl 11, 35
- Quetzalpapalotl Palace
Complex 33, 34
- Quevedo, Miguel Ángel de
47
- Quintana, Patricia 87
- R**
- Regina Coeli 49
- restaurants and cafés
Centro Histórico 73
Chapultepec and
Polanco 87
Coyoacán and San Ángel
93
Greater Mexico City 99
Paseo de la Reforma
and Zona Rosa 79
restrooms 108
Retablo de la Independencia
50
- Revolutionary Syndicate of
Technical Workers,
Painters, and Sculptors
92
- Rincón Argentino 87
- Ristorante Capri 87
- Rivera, Diego 6, 7, 14, 21,
41, 42, 43, 50, 51, 67,
68, 69, 70, 85, 88, 89,
90, 91, 92, 93, 95, 97
- Rodin, Auguste 27,
75, 91
- Rodríguez, Lorenzo 13
- Rojo, Alfredo Guati 90
- Roma 98
- rosca de reyes 61
- Rothko, Mark 43
- rowing 59
- S**
- safety 104, 108
- Saint Ramon 12
- Sala Nezahualcóyotl
56, 57
- salsa 73
- San Ángel Inn 93
- San Felipe Neri *see Iglesia
de la Profesa*
- San Miguel de Allende 63
- San Nicolás Totolapan 58
- Sanborns 50, 69, 73, 78
- Santa Anna 38, 39, 40
- Santa Cecilia Acatitlán
41, 95
- Sculpture Garden 47
- Sebastián 75, 83
- Secretaría de Educación
Pública 50, 70
- Secretariat of Tourism
(Federal) – SECTUR
102, 108
- SECTUR 102, 108
- Self-Portrait with a
Monkey* 92
- shopping 110
- shops
Centro Histórico 72
Chapultepec and
Polanco 86
Paseo de la Reforma
and Zona Rosa 78
- Siqueiros, David Alfaro
21, 41, 42, 43, 50, 51,
91, 98
- sitio taxis 106

Snob Café 87
 soccer 59
 Solares, Eduardo 90
 Soto, Miguel Ángel 48
 souvenirs 110
 Spartling, William 62
 Specia 99
 sports *see* outdoor
 activities and sports
 street crime 105
 Sun Stone 9, 10
 Sushi Roll 26, 73
 swimming 59

T
 Taco Inn 26, 73
 Talleres de los Ballesteros 78
 Tamayo, Rufino 21, 42, 43, 51, 83
 Tane 86
 Tasca Manolo 93
 Taxco 62
 taxi 103, 104, 106, 111
 Teatro Blanquita 57
 Teatro de la Danza 56, 57
 Teatro de los Insurgentes 57
 Tecla 99
 telephone 109
 Temple of the Feathered Conches 34
 Temple of Quetzalpapalotl 33, 35
 Temple of Tláloc 17
 Templo de la Enseñanza 48, 71
 Templo Mayor 6, 10, **16-17**, 41, 43, 67
 Templo de Regina Coeli 49
 Templo de Santo Domingo 48, 71
 Tenayuca 41, 95
 tennis 59
 Tenochtitlán 10, 16, 38, 67, 76, 88
 Tenochtitlán Ceremonial Center 17
 Teotihuacán 7, **32-33**, 38, 41, 62, 97
 Tepeyac 31
 Tepotzotlán 62
 Terrazas, Clemente 13
 Tezka 79

Thai Gardens 87
Tiempo Libre 57
 Tiffany 86
 time 107
 tipping 107, 111
 Tláloc 11, 17, 33, 35, 83, 85, 95
 Tlalpan 96
 Tlatelolco 10, 41, 76, 95
 Tlatilco 97
 toilets 107
 Toledo, Francisco 83, 86
 Tolsá, Manuel 13, 26, 44, 48, 49, 71, 75
 Toltec 9, 42, 62, 97
 Toltec Hall 9
 Tomb of Monte Albán 9
 Torre Latinoamericana 57, 69, 71
 Torre Mayor 45, 77
Torture of Cuauhtémoc, The 26
 tourist information centers 102
 Tours 104, 106, 111
 train travel 103
trajineras 7, 96
 trolleybus 104
 Trotsky, León 88, 89
 Tula 62
 Turibus 22, 104
 turista 105

U
 Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) 45, 50, 98
 Uriarte Talavera 86

V
 Valle de Bravo 58, 59, 63
 Valley of Mexico 58
Valley of Mexico from the Santa Isabel Mountain Range, The 27
 Vázquez, Pedro Ramírez 16, 83
 Velasco, Don Luis de 68
 Velasco, José María 7, 27, 69
 Veracruz 84
 Via Spiga 78
 Villa de Guadalupe 7, **30-31**, 61, 94, 95
 Villa, Pancho 39, 73, 75

Villalpando, Cristobal de 31, 49
Virgin of the Apocalypse, The 26
 Virgin de Guadalupe 7, 30, 31, 48, 61, 95
 visas 102
 visitor centers 102
 Viveros de Coyoacán 47, 58
 Voladores de Papantla 84

W
 walking 58, 104
 Wall of Serpents 62
 War of Mexican Independence 40
 Warhol, Andy 83
 watersports 59
 weather 105
 Western Cultures Hall 9
 women 107
 World Trade Center 98

X
 Xochimilco 41, 46, 49, 52, 57, 58, 60, 94, 96
 Xochimilco Floating Gardens 7, **28-9**, 57, 96
embarcaderos and floating vendors 29

Z
 Zócalo 12, 14, 15, 16, 40, 41, 48, 61, 66, 67
 Zona Rosa 76 *see also* Paseo de la Reforma and Zona Rosa 76
 Zoológico de Chapultepec 22, 57, 84

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Phrase Book

In an Emergency

Help!	¡Socorro!	soh-koh-roh
Call a doctor!	¡llame a un médico!	yah-meh ah oon meh-dee-koh
Call an ambulance!	¡llame una ambulancia!	yah-meh ah oonah ahm- boo-lahn-see-ah
Call the fire department!	¡llame a los bomberos!	yah-meh ah lohs boh-m-beh-rohs
policeman	el policía	ehl poh-lee-see-ah

Communication Essentials

Yes	¡Sí	see
No	No	noh
Please	Por favor	pohr fah-vohr
Thank you	Gracias	grah-see-ahs
Excuse me	Perdone	pehr-doh-neh
Hello	Hola	oh-lah
Bye (casual)	Chau	chau
Goodbye	Adiós	ah-dee-ohs
What?	¿Qué?	keh
When?	¿Cuándo?	kwahn-doh
Why?	¿Por qué?	pohr-keh
Where?	¿Dónde?	dohn-deh
How are you?	¿Cómo está usted?	koh-moh ehs-tah oos-tehd
Very well, thank you	Muy bien, gracias	mwee bee-ehn grah-see-ahs
I'm sorry	Lo siento	loh see-ehn-toh

Useful Phrases

Where is/are...?	¿Dónde está/están...?	dohn-deh ehs- tah/ehs-tahn
How far is it to...?	¿Cuántos metros/kilómetros hay de aquí a...?	kwahn-tohs meh-trohs/kee- loh-meh-trohs
Which way is it to...?	¿Por dónde se va a...?	eye deh ah-kee pohr dohn-deh seh vah ah
Do you speak English?	¿Habla inglés?	ah-blah een-gleh
I don't understand	No comprendo	noh kohm- prehn-doh
I would like	Quisiera/Me gustaría	kee-see-yehr-ah meh goo-stah -ree ah

Useful Words

big	grande	grahn-deh
small	pequeño/a	peh-keh-nyoh/nyah
hot	caliente	kah-lee-ehn-teh
cold	frio/a	free-oh/ah
good	bueno/a	bweh-noh/nah
bad	malo/a	mah-loh/lah
open	abierto/a	ah-bee-ehr- toh/tah
closed	cerrado/a	sehr-rah-doh/dah
left	izquierda	ees-key-ehr-dah
right	derecha	deh-reh-chah
(keep) straight ahead	(siga) derecho	(see-gah) deh- reh-choh
near	cerca	sehr-kah
far	lejos	leh-hohs
more	más	mahs
less	menos	meh-nohs
entrance	entrada	ehn-trah-dah
exit	salida	sah-lee-dah
elevator	el ascensor	ehl ah-sehn-sohr
toilets	baños/	bah-nyohs/

Post Offices and Banks

Where can I change money?	¿Dónde puedo cambiar dinero?	dohn-deh pweh- doh kahm-bee- ahr dee-meh-roh
How much is the postage to...?	¿Cuánto cuesta enviar una carta a...?	kwahn-toh kweh- stah ehn-vee- yahr oo-nah kahr-tah ah
I need stamps	Necesito estampillas	neh-seh-see-toh ehs-tahm- -pee-yahs

Shopping

How much does this cost?	¿Cuánto cuesta esto?	kwahn-toh kwehs-tah ehs-toh
I would like...	Me gustaría...	meh goos-tah- ree-ah
Do you have?	¿Tienen?	tee-yeh-nehn
Do you take credit cards/traveler's checks?	¿Aceptan tarjetas de crédito/cheques de viajero?	ahk-sehp-tahn tahr-heh-tahs deh kreh-dee- toh/ cheh-kehs deh vee-ah-heh-roh
expensive	caro	kahr-oh
cheap	barato	bah-rah-toh
white	blanco	blahn-koh
black	negro	neh-groh
red	rojo	roh-hoh
yellow	amarillo	ah-mah-ree-yoh
green	verde	vehr-deh
blue	azul	ah-sool
bank	el banco	ehl bahn-koh
market	el tianguis/mercado	ehl tee-ahn-goo- ees/mehr-kah- doh
post office	la oficina de correos	lah oh-fee-see- nah deh kohr-reh- ohs
supermarket	el supermercado	ehl soo-pehr- mehr-kah-doh
travel agency	la agencia de viajes	lah ah-hehn-see-ah deh vee-ah-hehs

Transportation

When does the... leave?	¿A qué hora sale el...?	ah keh oh-rah sah-leh ehl
Where is bus stop?	¿Dónde está la parada de camiones?	dohn-deh ehs- tah lah pah- rah-dah deh kah-mee-ohn-es
Is there a bus/train to...?	¿Hay un camión/tren a...?	eye oon kah-mee- ohn/trehn ah
ticket office	la taquilla	lah tah-kee-yah
round-trip ticket	un boleto de ida y vuelta	oon boh-leh-toh deh ee-dah ee voo-ehl-tah
one-way ticket	un boleto de ida solamente	oon boh-leh-toh deh ee-dah soh- lah-mehn-teh
airport	el aeropuerto	ehl ah-ehr- oh-poo-

Sightseeing

museum	el museo	ehl moo-seh-oh
cathedral	la catedral	lah kah-teh- drahl

church	la iglesia/ la basílica	lah ee- gleh -see-ah/ lah bah- see -lee- kah
garden	el jardín	ehl hahr- deen
pyramid	la pirámide	lah pee- rah -meed
tourist	la oficina de turismo	lah oh-fee- see - nah deh too- rees -moh
ticket	la entrada	lah ehnh- trah -dah
guide (person)	el/la guía	ehl/lah gee -ah
guide (book)	la guía	lah gee -ah
map	el mapa	ehl mah -pah
taxi stand	sitio de taxis	see -tee-on deh tahk -sees

Staying in a Hotel

Do you have a vacant room?	¿Tienen una habitación libre?	tee-eh-nehn oo -nah ah-bee- tah-see- ohn lee -breh
double room	habitación doble	ah-bee-tah-see- ohn doh -bleh
single room	habitación sencilla	ah-bee-tah-see- ohn sehn -see-yah
room with a bath	habitación con baño	ah-bee-tah-see- ohn kohn bah - nyoh
shower	la ducha	lah doo -chah
I have a reservation	Tengo una habitación reservada	tehnh-goh oo -nah ah-bee-tah-see- ohn reh -sehr- vah -dah
key	la llave	lah yah -veh

Eating Out

Have you got a table for...	¿Tienen mesa para...?	tee-eh-nehn meh-sah pah- rah
I want to reserve	Quiero reservar	kee-eh-roh reh-sehr- vahr
a table	una mesa	oo -nah meh -sah
The bill, please	La cuenta, por favor	lah kwehn -tah pohr fah- vohr
I am a vegetarian	Soy vegetariano/a	soy veh-heh-tah- ree- ah -no/na
waiter/waitress	mesero/a	meh- seh -roh/rah
menu	la carta	lah kahr -tah
wine list	la carta de vinos	lah kahr -tah deh vee -nohs
glass	un vaso	oon vah -soh
knife	un cuchillo	oon koo -chee-yoh
fork	un tenedor	oon teh -neh- dohr
spoon	una cuchara	oo -nah koo- chah - rah
breakfast	el desayuno	ehl deh-sah- yoo - noh
lunch	la comida	lah koh- mee -dah
dinner	la cena	lah seh -nah
main course	el plato fuerte	ehl plah -toh foo- ehr -teh
starters	las entradas	lahs ehnh- trah -das

Menu Decoder

el aceite	ah- see -eh-teh	oil
las aceitunas	ah- seh - toon -ahs	olives
el agua mineral	ah-gwa mee- neh- rahl	mineral water
el ajo	ah-hoh	garlic
el arroz	ahr- rohs	rice
el azúcar	ah- soo -kahr	sugar
una bebida	beh- bee -dah	drink
el café	kah- feh	coffee
la carne	kahr-neh	meat
la cebolla	seh- boh -yah	onion

la cerveza	sehr- veh -sah	beer
el cerdo	sehr -doh	pork
el chocolate	choh-koh -lah-teh	chocolate
la ensalada	ehnh-sah -lah-dah	salad
la fruta	froo -tah	fruit
el helado	eh- lah -doh	ice cream
el huevo	oo- eh -voh	egg
el jugo	ehl hoo -goh	juice
la langosta	lahnh- gohs -tah	lobster
la leche	leh -cheh	milk
la mantequilla	mahn-teh - kee -yah	butter

los mariscos	mah- rees -kohs	seafood
el pan	pahn	bread
el pescado	pehs- kah -doh	fish
picante	pee- kahn -teh	spicy
la pimienta	pee-mee - yehn -tah	pepper
el pollo	poh -yoh	chicken
el postre	pohs -treh	dessert
el queso	keh -soh	cheese
el refresco	reh- frehs -koh	soft drink/soda
la sal	sahl	salt
la salsa	sahl -sah	sauce
la sopa	soh -pah	soup
el té	teh	herb tea (usually camomile)

el té negro	teh neh -groh	tea
la torta	tohr -tah	sandwich
las tostadas	tohs- tah -dahs	toast
el vinagre	vee- nah -greh	vinegar
el vino blanco	vee-noh blahn -koh	white wine
el vino tinto	vee-noh teen -toh	red wine

Numbers

0	cero	seh -roh
1	uno	oo -noh
2	dos	dohs
3	tres	trehs
4	cuatro	kwa -troh
5	cinco	seen -koh
6	seis	says
7	siete	see -eh-teh
8	ocho	oh -choh
9	nueve	nweh -veh
10	diez	dee-ehs
20	veinte	veh -een-teh
30	treinta	treh -een-tah
40	cuarenta	kwah- rehn -tah
50	cincuenta	seen- kwehn -tah
60	sesenta	seh- sehn -tah
70	setenta	seh- tehn -tah
80	ochenta	oh- chehn -tah
90	noventa	noh- vehn -tah
100	cien	see-ehnh
200	doscientos	dohs-see- ehnh -tohs
500	quinientos	khee-nee- ehnh -tohs
1,000	mil	meel

Time

one minute	un minuto	oon mee - noo -toh
one hour	una hora	oo -nah oh -rah
half an hour	media hora	meh-dee-ah oh -rah
Monday	lunes	loo -nehs
Tuesday	martes	mahr -tehs
Wednesday	miércoles	mee- ehr -koh-lehs
Thursday	jueves	hoo- weh -vehs
Friday	viernes	vee- ehr -nehs
Saturday	sábado	sah -bah-doh
Sunday	domingo	doh- meen -goh



Selected Street Index

2 de Abril	N2	Doctor Juan Navarro	M5	Niños Héroes	M5
5 de Febrero	O5	Doctor Lavista	M4	Niza	K4
16 de Septiembre	P3	Doctor Liceaga	M5	Orozco Y Berra	L1
20 de Noviembre	O4	Doctor Mora	N2	Paseo de la Reforma	M2
Alfredo Chavero	P6	Doctor Pascua	N5	Pedro Moreno	M1
Allende	P1	Doctor Rafael Lucio	M5	Pino Suárez	Q4
Álvaro Obregón	J6	Doctor Río de la Loza	M4	Plaza Capitán R. Malpica	N4
Angela Peralta	N2	Doctor Salvador García Diego	M6	Plaza Ciudadela	M3
Antonio Solá	G5	Doctor Vertiz	N4	Plaza de la República	L2
Arcos de Belén	N4	Dolores	N3	Plaza Garibaldi	P1
Atenas	L3	Donato Guerra	M2	Plaza Hidalgo	X2
Avenida 5 de Mayo	P2	Donceles	Q2	Plaza Madrid	J5
Avenida Alfonso Reyes	F6	Echeveste	P4	Plaza Melchor Ocampo	G2
Avenida Benito Juárez	N2	Edison	L2	Plaza Morelia	L4
Avenida Chapultepec	K4	Emilio Dondé	M3	Plaza Popocateptl	H5
Avenida Colegio Militar	D4	Enrico Martínez	M3	Plaza Río de Janeiro	K5
Avenida Cuauhtemoc	L5	Esteva	D6	Plaza San Fernando	M1
Avenida de la República	M2	Fernando Montes de Oca	F5	Plaza Santo Domingo	Q2
Avenida de los Constituyentes	D5	Florencia	J4	Polanco	D2
Avenida Ejército Nacional	F1	Francisco Díaz Covarrubias	J2	Ponciano Arriaga	L2
Avenida Francisco Ignacio Madero	P3	Frontera	L5	Popocateptl	H5
Avenida Francisco Sosa	W2	General León	E5	Puebla	K5
Avenida Guerrero	M1	General Pedro A. de los Santos	E5	Puente de Alvarado	L1
Avenida Hidalgo	N2	General Prim	L3	Pugibet	N3
Avenida Horacio	D1	Glorieta de Insurgentes	K5	Regina	Q4
Avenida Insurgentes Centro	K3	Gómez Farías	K2	República de Argentina	Q1
Avenida Insurgentes Norte	L1	González Obregón	Q2	República de Brasil	Q1
Avenida Insurgentes Sur	K4	Gran Avenida	E5	República de Chile	Q1
Avenida Insurgentes Sur	T2	Guanajuato	L6	República de Colombia	R2
Avenida Mazatlán	F5	Guillermo Prieto	J2	República de Cuba	P2
Avenida México	W2	Gutenberg	F2	República de Guatemala	R2
Avenida Michoacán	F6	Hidalgo	S3	República de Honduras	P1
Avenida Morelos	L3	Ignacio Mariscal	M2	República de Perú	P1
Avenida Nuevo Leon	G5	Ignacio Ramírez	L2	República de Uruguay	P3
Avenida Oaxaca	J6	Ignaciol Vallarta	L2	República de Venezuela	R2
Avenida Parque Lira	D6	Independencia	N3	República del Salvador	P3
Avenida Parque Vía Sullivan	J2	Isabel la Católica	P3	Revoligigedo	N3
Avenida Presidente Masarik	D2	Iturbide	M2	Río Amazonas	K3
Avenida Revolución	T2	Jesús María	R4	Río Atoyac	G3
Avenida Ribera de San Cosme	K1	Jesús Terán	M2	Río de la Plata	G3
Avenida Río Churubusco	W1	José Azueta	N2	Río Elba	G3
Avenida Sonora	G4	José Emparán	M2	Río Guadalquivir	G2
Avenida Tamaulipas	G6	José María Iglesia	P4	Río Misisipí	G3
Avenida Universidad	U3	Jose María Lafragua	L2	Río Niágara	G2
Avenida Yucatán	H5	José Tomas Cuellar	P6	Río Nilo	G3
Balderas	M2	José Vasconcelos	F5	Río Pánuco	J3
Berna	J4	Juan Escutia	F5	Río Rhin	J3
Bolívar	P5	Justo Sierra	R2	Río Tiber	J4
Boulevard Presidente Adolfo López Mateos	C5	Lancaster	J4	Rodano	F3
Calzada Chivatito	D3	Laredo	G5	Roldán	R4
Calzada del Cerro	E4	Lázaro Cárdenas	P3	Roma	L3
Calzada General Mariano Escobedo	F2	Leona Vicario	R2	Rosales	M2
Calzada Mahatma Gandhi	E4	Liverpool	K4	Rosas Moreno	K1
Calzada Melchor Ocampo	J1	Londres	K4	Rubén Darío	D2
Camino Al Desierto de los Leones	U2	López	N3	Sadi Carnot	K2
Campos Elíseos	E2	Loreto	R3	Salamanca	G4
Chimalpopoca	N5	Luis Moya	N3	San Antonio Abad	Q5
Citlalteptl	H5	Madrid	L3	San Ildefonso	R2
Colón	M2	Maestro Antonio Caso	K2	San Jerónimo	Q4
Condesa	P2	Manuel María Contreras	J2	San Pablo	R4
Copenhague	K4	Manuel Villalongín	J3	Santa Veracruz	N2
Córdoba	K5	Marconi	P2	Seminario	Q2
Correo Mayor	R3	Marquez	F5	Serapio Rendón	K2
Darwin	F2	Mérida	L5	Sevilla	G3
Diagonal 20 de Noviembre	P5	Mesones	Q4	Shakespeare	F1
Diagonal Patriotismo	F6	Miguel Angel de Quevedo	V3	Tabasco	J6
Doctor Andrade	N5	Miguel Ramos Arizpe	L2	Tacuba	Q2
Doctor Atl	L1	Mina	M1	Talavera	R4
Doctor Claudio Bernard	N5	Minerva la Rosa	U1	Thiers	F1
Doctor Enrique Gm	L1	Molino del Rey	C5	Venustiano Carranza	P3
Doctor Jiménez	M6	Monte de Piedad	Q2	Veracruz	G4
		Monterrey	J5	Versalles	L3
		Nápoles	K4	Víctor Hugo	F2
		Newton	C2	Victoria	N3
		Nezahualcóyotl	P4	Zócalo	Q3